

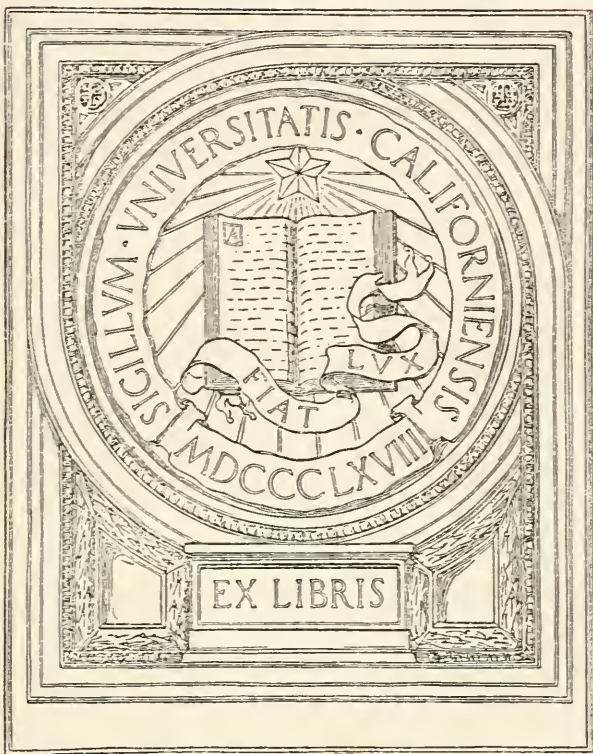
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SIR

RALPH WILLOUGHBY



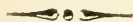
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SIR
RALPH WILLOUGHBY:
AN HISTORICAL TALE
OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

IN WHICH ARE INSERTED
THE DEDICATORY SONNETS OF EDMUND SPENSER,
WITH SKETCHES OF CHARACTER,

BY THE AUTHOR OF CONINGSBY.

Sir Samuel B. Bayly
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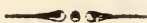


FLORENCE
PRINTED BY I. MAGHERI
1820.

English - Alumnus

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PREFACE



The readers of the English publications, which for the last forty or fifty years have gone under the name of NOVELS, will here find nothing to their taste. This Tale is intended for those, whose minds have been formed in a different school. A vehicle has been sought for the conveyance of those sentiments of the heart; with which every age and every

country can sympathise: which come home to us in those moments of reflection, when sorrow and disappointment teach us to be serious and wise: which, when the wild exuberance and blind vanity of youthful hope have subsided, are hailed by all those, whose bosoms are capable of being ameliorated by time; or whose heads are capable of being taught by experience.

The subject chosen on the present occasion is partly Historical: but the Hero is ima-

ginary. An ideal person has been placed amid real scenes; and real characters.

The advantages of Fiction over History in elucidating general truths have been too often explained to permit the repetition of them. He, who is confined to the relation of what has actually happened, in telling what is true in particular instances, may be confined to tell, what is not generally true: the author, who invents with probability, freed from such trammels, can better exemplify

what is of universal import. In a portrait the merit is in particularity ; in a fiction , the reverse .

The author, whose ambition is to adapt his writings to a wide circulation, would perhaps do ill to choose the present plan. If the common Novel-readers will little relish it from its not affording any mirror of modern manners ; nor any love-intrigue ; nor any surprizing adventures of Beings, who never could have existed ; and forms and fashions of so-

ciety, that never could have taken place, in any age, in any country, the more sober reader will refuse to take it up, because he sees it in the shape of a Tale; and therefore deems it too light for his graver and more sober studies!

The interest of Narrative is either in the truth of the facts, (to which history is confined); or in their character, their combination and development; and the picturesque force with which they are presented; or lastly in the just and touching

reflections naturally springing from them, by which they are accompanied.

To this last interest only the present production aspires.

By the second sort of interest it will be said that the greatest genius is shewn; and the most powerful impressions are made. But as there are endless diversities in the duties and purposes of the human mind, so use and excellence ought not to be limited to one species of intellectual display. It is the task

of some to exhibit the appearances and symptoms of moral movements; of others, to reason upon their causes and effects.

We live in an age of literary charlatanism: what is simple and natural has little chance of making its way: we are all for glare, and novelty, and wonder: we like the extremes of the most laboured and distorted artifice, and of the most childish or most barbarous nakedness: we wish to persuade ourselves, that

we have for the first time found out the paths of excellence ; and arrived at the due fruits of Genius. Charlatans in every age are succesful for a little while. There was a time, when Marino had thrown into obscurity and neglect the works and names of Dante and of Petrarch ! Till authority supersedes taste, the Mob will always be wrong ! A dull appetite requires to be excited by the strongest mixtures.

The Dedicatory Sonnets of Spenser are here introduced,

not for the purpose, as some will suppose, of filling up the pages, but of bringing them into more general notice; and to do fresh honour to those, whom they commemorate. They are marked by a singular fidelity of features, which perhaps is their principal merit. They bring to life persons, whom the testimony of Spenser alone is sufficient to prove worthy of lasting fame.

If it be pleaded that a Tale of Fiction is not the best channel, by which to recall their memo-

ries, it may be answered, that it affords opportunities which may justify and embody probable conjecture, when sufficient evidence is wanting to make it a part of positive biography.

- If the spirit of the Times, in which the scenes are laid, is misrepresented; if Truth in its general character at this period is perverted, the use of Fiction is badly chosen, and badly applied: but if the result of the whole is a picture appropriate as well as animated,

then some advantage is derived from this mode of conveying instruction. The freedom, the selection, the force of sentiment, the vigour of expression, which it allows, give it a superiority over the narrower boundaries of recorded facts.

In choosing the sober characters of History to form the personages of a Romance, the author incurs a hazard of dullness, above which the airy Beings of Imagination would easily raise him. But there is a time for all things: we cannot al-

ways travel in the clouds: we must sometimes be content with more tranquil and humble excursions: our flagging wings require a repeated return to repose upon the firm earth. The author has not been unfamiliar with such excursions; but he thinks it as undesirable, as it is impossible, always to indulge in them.

As to busy, crowded, and intricate plot; well contrived and fortunate rencontres, which by violent excitement and striking contrasts keep up the

reader's strong interest in alternations of painful suspense and delighted discovery, --- merits of this kind can only be reached by an high species of magical genius ; and deserve all the praise , which a reader of enlightened taste can bestow upon them ! But this ought not to exclude the value, or the desert, or the praise of other sorts of intellectual production ! Nor are more simple stories, and more simple modes of combining incidents, without some advantages over

them! They do not in the same degree lose their interest by a repeated perusal: the knowlege of the story does not decrease the force of the sentiments or the images: as nothing depends on novelty and surprize, so a frequent recurrence but proves their stirring value, and solidity of basis. They rest on the essential ore of the ingredients: not on the ingenuity of the form given by the workman.

It was said that the author of the Pursuits of Literature

wrote the Text of his poem as a peg to hang his Notes upon. He who has filled his mind by years of incessant reflection, operating on a moral and acute sensibility, may be justified in seeking various modes of embodying and communicating part of those stores, with which his intellect overflows. There are thousands of nice distinctions; of forcible and convincing remarks; of pathetic or amiable and instructive sentiments; which

may thus be brought forward and preserved, and be expressed with a clearness, a felicity, or a glow of language, that would otherwise have never risen, or have vanished with the rapidity of the clouds.

Let the reader, who can sympathise with a virtuous and generous emotion, or a noble resolve of heart, or a sublime conclusion of thought, answer, if he does not feel ameliorated and elated, when he meets with these pictured

*records of ideal excellence !
The knowlege of the Story
will not much diminish wha-
tever interest there may be in
these passages. Yet the Narra-
tive is the best mode by which
they could have been introduc-
ed ; and often the only mode
by which they would have been
suggested !*

*Are these then the idle oc-
cupations of an Understanding,
which Age ought to have ma-
tured ? or are they not rather
the mellow fruits, which the*

experience of Time will justify ?

It is not in youth, that our moral opinions take that depth of colouring, those prevailing marks of sincerity, which the long sufferings of humanity, which disappointment, and the vanity of possession, inflict on us.

If the production of a common NOVEL seems among the easiest achievements of literature, because it is daily manufactured by the most illite-

rate and stupid of those who hold a pen, it must not be supposed, that to execute this sort of composition well, requires slight talents!

The author of Guy Mannering, etc. has shewn of late years, to what an height of genius, and of inexhaustible invention, prose romances may be carried!

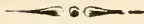
This work, as it has been said, aspires to no such creative richness: it is intended as a vehicle of moral and his-

torical remarks ; which notwithstanding the volume may be confounded by the ignorant with common Novels , will not on that account , if they are intrinsically just , lose their interest with the judicious.

S. E. B.

Florence 17 April 1820.

RALPH WILLOUGHBY



A T A L E



Ralph Willoughby was the third of six sons of Sir Charles Willoughby *Knight*, who used the title of Lord Uffington, though that honour had been attained and forfeited, in consequence of his Father's concern in the Northern rebellion of the Earls of Westmoreland and Northumberland.

These misfortunes had forced Lord Uffington abroad; and there he had passed many years of his life in comparative obscurity. He had wandered from the Netherlands through France, Germany,

Switzerland, and Italy . His children had thus received a varied and enlarged education; and were all accomplished, as far as their native talents would admit .

Ralph had shewn more abilities than the rest; a much greater quickness in learning; and a more active and acute spirit of remark . But he was supposed to be more moody in his temper; and less compliant to the manners and habits of society, than his brothers .

What recommended him especially to his father's favour and notice was a plaintive yet indignant resentment of the adversity and fallen state of his family . The mode in which he felt, and excited interest, on this subject, gave it a sort of character of romance .

Lord Uffington made every effort to obtain Q. Elizabeth's reconciliation and

forgiveness : but the Queen was stern ; and little inclined to feel the emotions of compassion . He had another obstacle in his way : he was of the blood of the *Delapoles*, who were a proscribed race.

The utmost concession he could procure was a licence to his son to visit England ; and to endeavour by courses of fidelity and loyalty to lay the grounds of future mercy .

Ralph, in particular, was fixed upon by his Father for this purpose : and his slender means were strained to enable him to do it with effect . Lord Uffington had a very high opinion of Ralph's genius ; and trusted to the fruits of it, in worldly advancement, with the fondest and brightest anticipations.

Ralph was as ambitious and as san-

guine, as his father would have him to be : but there was not an exact agreement in their ideas of ways and means . Each was so fearful of a clearer understanding upon this subject ; and so desirous to delude himself that, each carefully avoided pressing the other to be explicit .

Ralph was far from being at his ease in England . He made no progress among persons of consequence : he gained no notice for his talents . He was deficient in that apparent compliance with the genius and conduct of others , which is the grand mean of worldly success . He trusted to reason, to eloquence, to the consciousness of rectitude .

It is always as dangerous to be above, as to be below the age, in which we live . Willoughby's very qualities of preemin-

ence were in his way . His talents raised envy and hatred; his birth caused equal disinclination towards him .

It was denied, that the long line of illustrious blood, that flowed in his veins, gave any pretension to distinction, or favour . Actual wealth ; immediate possession of place, or power, were asserted to be the only practical titles to preference in the distribution of promotion, honours, confidence, employment . Yet the men , who set forth these grounds of favouritism, gave themselves the most insolent airs of birth to those, who were their inferiors in descent, but their superiors in wealth.

There were certain new families in those days, as in these, who endeavoured to bear down all by the weight of purse.

An accident at length introduced

Ralph into the acquaintance of the Minister Lord Burleigh . That Minister had occasion for a young man familiar with the manners of a particular Court. Ralph had spent several of his early years there. A friend took the opportunity of introducing him upon that ground.

Lord Burleigh listened to his answers on the questions put to him with profound attention . He was pleased with his clearness; and the sagacity of his remarks . The character of one person especially, of whom Lord Burleigh required particulars, was given with so much vivacity, and discrimination, that the old statesman began to think , that Ralph might be of especial service to him .

He took him into favour: the period was critical: sagacity, deep insight, varied knowlege, were requisite: the routine of

office failed : the foresight, which could judge of future conduct in untried situations, was demanded. Lord Burleigh found Ralph equal to the occasion.

Ralph now for a time ruled over the Minister's bureau. His ascendancy had too broad a light, not to daunt his competitors in the same office. Ralph's fortune seemed made: he thought so himself. A daughter of Burleigh cast favourable eyes on him: the Minister himself seemed to wink at it.

When the occasion had passed, Ralph relapsed into intellectual pursuits more congenial to his nature. He always returned in a short time from the thorny paths of politics in disgust. He gave himself up to the composition of a poem, in which there was a mingled enthusiasm, in favour of romantic love and heroic birth.

Meantime the common duties of office were neglected ; while the clouds, that had been gathering on the Continent against England, were dispersed. — The men of common minds, and vulgar business, again raised their heads, and resumed their courage.

An intrigue was now formed to cast Ralph from Burleigh's confidence.

Ralph, careless, self-relying, without craft, and without management, either overlooked, or disdained, the nets that were gathering round him. He neither concealed his propensities, nor his disgusts. He circumvented no enemy: he boldly came forward with open arms against him.

His poetical talents were sily enlarged upon to Burleigh on every occasion. Burleigh hated poetry: he thought that it

was a disqualification for all that was solid in the conduct of life. He disliked it still more, because it was the passion of his enraged son-in-law, Edward Vere, Earl of Oxford.

The history of the quarrel between the Old Statesman and the poetical Peer yet remains in some obscurity. It is said that the Earl, in resentment for Burleigh's refusal to save the Duke of Norfolk, vented his anger upon the Countess; and dissipated his fortune that he might beggar her children. The story is out of all probability. Who would greatly injure himself directly, that he might iniure another more remotely; and in a less degree? —

Oxford was a capricious character, vain; proud; and perhaps unprincipled. The more rational conjecture is, that his

conduct was instigated by complicated causes .

He had perhaps married Burleigh's daughter from motives of interest. The fortunes of his illustrious House were in some degree of decay : the political consequence of the old families was also declining under Burleigh. Oxford might hope that this alliance would re-instate him ; and give facilities to his aspiring ambition : while the minister, a new man , might be anxious to cover his new honours by the marriage of his daughter with a Peer, perhaps the most ancient and illustrious in birth , of all the English nobility.

Expectation is almost always disappointed. Possession and familiarity might bring chagrin on both sides . Burleigh could scarcely behold the qualities of

Oxford's mind, brought under the expansion of the sun, without discomfort; and afterwards when ill-will had commenced, without abhorrence and disgust. There is nothing, which this class of men hate, like fancy and sentiment. The whole discipline of their intellects is bent to divest every object, and every idea, of every colour thrown upon them by these creative influences. They think Poetry not only devoid of superiority, but a positively false and delusive Art. Now and then they are heard to cite a couplet, or three or four verses, with praise: but examine the character of that citation: it will be found to be some dry precept; some practical axiom; which has nothing of the character of poetry but the metre; and nothing of the beauty of expression but terseness.

It is not here meant to bring forward Lord Oxford as a great genius ; or of any striking poetical merit. Though perhaps he ought only to be classed among the minor wits , he had wit enough to be the fair object of Lord Burleigh's distaste .

Ralph Willoughby, though a lover of similar walks of literature, was not on cordial terms with Lord Oxford. He found this nobleman too reserved; too affected; too selfish. Let me be excused, after what I have said , for introducing here Two of Spenser's Sonnets , prefixed to the Fairy Queen; the accuracy of which may now be duly appreciated , while they will furnish proof of the fidelity of my portraits.

SONNET

*To the right honourable, the Lord
Burleigh, Lord High Treasurer of
England.*

To you, right noble Lord, whose careful breast
To menage of most grave affairs is bent;
And on whose mighty shoulders most doth rest
The burden of this Kingdom's government;
As the wide compass of the Firmament
On Atlas' mighty shoulders is upstaid;
Unfitly I these idle rhymes present,
The labour of lost time, and wit unstaid:
Yet, if their deeper sense be inly weigh'd;
And the dim veil, with which from common view
Their fairer parts are hid, aside be laid,
Perhaps not vain they may appear to you!
Such as they be, vouchsafe them to receive;
And wipe their faults out of your censure grave.

EDMUND SPENSER.

The sarcasm at Burleigh for his contempt of poetry, is here sufficiently apparent: he calls it ironically

« The labour of lost time, and wit unstaidd: » then goes on sily to defend it against this insinuation.

S O N N E T

To the Right Honourable, the Earl of Oxenford, High Chamberlain of England. etc.

Receive, most noble Lord, in gentle gree
 The unripe fruit of an unready wit;
 Which by thy countenance doth crave to be
 Defended from foul Envy's poisonous bit:
 Which so to do doth thee right well besit,
 Sith th' antique glory of thine ancestry
 Under a shady veil is therein writ;
 And eke thine own long-living memory

Succeeding them in true nobility;

And also for the love, which thou dost bear
To th' Heliconian Imps, and they to thee!

They unto thee, and thou to them most dear!

Dear as thou art unto thyself; so love

That loves and honours thee, as doth behove!

EDMUND SPENSER.

I think it cannot be questioned that the two last lines of this Sonnet contain a sarcasm, as strong as that in the passage of the former Sonnet pointed at Burleigh.

It was against Burleigh that the following well-known and beautiful passage of this Poet's *Mother Hubbard's Tale* was levelled.

Full little knowest thou, that hast not tried,
What hell it is in suing long to bide;
To lose good days, that might be better spent;
To waste long nights in pensive discontent;
To speed to day, to be put back to-morrow;

To feed on hope; to pine with fear and sorrow;
 To have thy Prince's grace; yet *want her Peer's*;
 To have thy asking, yet wait many years;
 To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares;
 To eat thy heart with comfortless despairs;
 To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run;
 To spend, to give, to want, to be undone!

It was at this time, and under the prevalence of these notions, that the secret enemies of Ralph Willoughby disclosed to Burleigh the extent of his addiction to poetical pursuits. They procured surreptitiously the outline of his Poem, and many large extracts.

This composition abounded with Imaginary Personages, designed with a free and glowing pencil: and luxuriating in ideal Beings, in which the fancy knows that it is dealing with excellence unattainable in the human form.

It was the purpose of the betrayers of this poem, to give it a literal interpretation, political, or personal. A pretence was made to give a construction to numerous passages, by which the life of Burleigh was said to be alluded to; and not only bitterly censured, but libelled. Even the atrocious falsehood was hazarded, that this mode was taken to betray secrets abroad, learned from Burleigh in his confidential capacity. To add plausibility to this, and at the same time to aggravate his treachery, it was insinuated that Ralph was nothing more than a spy for the Foreign Interests, in which his Family had formerly been engaged; and that a variety of Cabinet-secrets were thus to be laid open to them; while there thus seemed to be an impunity in the

transaction; and an impossibility to bring the treason home to him.

It required much ingenuity to give any appearance, and, still more, any consistency, to these charges. Three or four very subtle heads, easily found in Burleigh's Household, did this. They employed themselves a whole winter in constructing it. They had emissaries in the family of Lord Uffington abroad: and they procured by bribery the agency of a person, who had formerly, when a young man, been in the Northern Rebellion with the Lords Westmoreland and Northumberland.

Burleigh was now growing very old; and his faculties were beginning to decay. He was fully conscious of the intrigues, the caution, the industry, the artifices,

by which he himself had been successful; and he knew therefore that for that path of preeminence there was no rest. By the same modes as he had triumphed over others, would others triumph over him, the moment he relaxed his exertions.

His latter days therefore were not days of dignified repose, but of tormenting anxiety. He had now become not merely cautious, and inquisitive, but morbidly suspicious, and fretful. Such a scheme as Ralph's enemies had formed, could not at an earlier period have had a chance of success.

Burleigh's last daughter had for some time encouraged the addresses of Ralph. It was flattering to a young man, the younger son of a ruined family, to be thus distinguished. Gersenda Cecil was a perfect coquet; lively, sensible, saga-

cious, witty. She had a brown, but clear complexion, expressive eyes, and good features. Her person was small, but delicately made. When Ralph was in her father's highest favour, she was struck with his talents, his person, and his manners. She began then to please herself with the lustre of his birth; and to see in him the revival of all the honours, and all the power, of his family.

Ralph had strongly in his mind his father's wishes and injunctions. He saw fully all the advantages of this alliance: his sanguine temper fancied, in what he wished, all that his judgment ought to approve. He began to be in love with the creature of his imagination. Gersenda took, in his mind, colours which did not belong to her: and he worshiped the idol formed by his own brain.

The plotters against the esteem, in which he had hitherto been held by Burleigh, now began to perceive that they had made some impression on the opinions of the Old Statesman. He said to himself « the verses shewn to me are certainly Willoughby's composition: they are many of them in his own handwriting; and they are so marked with erasures and corrections, as to prove that they cannot be copies. This I take to be strong *prima facie* presumption against the young man. When I took him into my service, I had not a suspicion that he had this silly turn. I lay it down as a rule, which scarcely admits of an exception, that no man continues for any time fit for business; or is ever to be relied upon for that patient perseverance, by which alone success in the management.

of human affairs is secured, — who is tinged by the mania of this empty pursuit.

« I have been tolerably lucky in the world: I have raised myself from a very moderate station, into rank, and affluence, and power, such as few subjects have so long enjoyed in England; especially in tempestuous times. The Nation, and I may add, Europe generally, have given me credit for abilities, and wisdom. I am well aware that these qualities, if I possess them, have had but one source. It is labour: well-directed and unrelaxing labour! the labour of separating truth from falsehood; of stripping all the objects of life of their disguises; of seeing things, not as they first appear; but as cold examination, and reflection prove them to be!

« Is it not the business of Poetry to do the direct contrary of this? Does it not seek for delusions? Does it not endeavour to prolong false colours?

« But while I have succeeded, who are the men, that have failed? Men, who taunted me in youth! men, with whom in quickness, in fancy, in the empty faculty, called eloquence, I could no more vie than an owl with an eagle! How often has Buckhurst bowed with humility beneath my sager knowlege! How often has Sydney trembled beneath my frown! How often has Raleigh turned defeated from my penetrating look!

« It is clear then, that Ralph Willoughby, whether there be any hidden meaning in his verses, or not, is not fit for my confidence! But whatever I may privately think, my sagacity is not so much decay-

ed, as to be insensible to the motives of his accusers. To them I will not discover the conclusions, to which I have come. I have made one mistake by admitting this young man into the recesses of my Cabinet : I will not commit another by letting these plotters into the knowlege that, through their means, I have convicted myself of an error !

« Nor have I forgot , that I must not hastily make an enemy of Willoughby . These fancy-bitten persons , if they cannot do good, can do much ill . They have the art of making great things out of small; and many a little hint , that may have been picked up in the course of my affairs, may be hatched into a treason. »

When Lord Burleigh received the communications of these intriguers with doubt and apparent coldness, they hesi-

tated how to proceed. But « he loved the treason, though he despised the traitors » He was unwilling to lose whatever information they could give him: and therefore by his very doubts contrived to extort more and more from them.

Ralph still sat at Burleigh's table; unsuspecting; sometimes pensive and silent; but irradiated with inward smiles, and glowing in the new creations of his fancy. His enemies watched with anxious pertinacity the movements of his thoughts. They could not infer that Burleigh had discovered to him any displeasure. Nor was Burleigh so forgetful of the mask he had worn through life; as to let them see what he was meditating.

Gersenda alone, at moments when age a little eased itself of the veil in the presence of filial affection, caught a glimpse

of what was working in the old man's bosom. She saw that Ralph did not possess the place there, he had hitherto possessed. She was vain, curious, wavering, full of schemes. She had a sort of acuteness, that prided itself in seeing the turns and obliquities of the human character. She elicited with a great deal of cunning something of the nature of her father's new discoveries.

She resolved to try the ground of these suggestions with Ralph at their next interview. She entered upon the subject of Poetry with him, when they met at dinner the following day. He was reserved: she was more pressing: he became cold: she became angry.

The plotters overheard part of this conversation; and resolved to take advantage of it. A day's consultation enabl-

ed them to make the arrangement in a way highly satisfactory to themselves. They possessed the ear of a female in Gersenda's confidence. They instructed her in a train of insinuations with regard to the difference between the real and assumed character of Ralph. They taught her that he was a man of unequalled dissimulation; never professing what he really had in view; pursuing one object, while his inclination was bent upon another; and resolving to retrieve the desperation of his fortune, and family honours, by any sacrifice, or any deception.

They entered upon the poem; its character; and tendency. They said that, couched beneath the outward fable, might be discovered all his secret attachments, and genuine opinions. The whole was a deep allegory, designed to blacken

all the family of the Cecils. Burleigh was veiled under one of the principal personages, as a man eminent in no quality but cunning: as selfish, false, avaricious, cruel, dishonest: as guided by narrow and short sighted politics; and having no end in view but private aggrandisement.

They went on to suggest that in every description of female beauty, his real taste appeared decidedly opposed to every sort of charm, or pretension, which characterized Gersenda: that the principle every where insinuated was the necessity of distiguising real inclinations: that a man might marry for interest, and spend the money, so gained, on those whom he preferred: and that the State could never flourish, where men were raised to power, on the pretence of abilities, not of birth!

Gersenda, discouraged in her attachment by observing that clouds gathered round the head of Ralph, was prepared to entertain insinuations to his prejudice. Her suspicions were alive; her jealousy became violent and angry. She reproached Ralph: she piqued his pride: she roused his indignation. They quarreled, and vowed eternal disunion.

Gersenda, full of resentment, now resolved to confirm, and increase her father's suspicions. In another month, Ralph was dismissed from the service of Burleigh.

Ralph wrote to his father the intelligence of this dismissal. It came like the blow of death upon the old man, already broken by misfortunes. Ralph had been the anchor of his only remaining hopes. Through him, he flattered himself, that

before he closed his eyes in the grave, he might have the blessing of seeing his family restored to their country, their rank, and their possessions. All the consoling prospect now vanished in a moment. With it fled the impulse, that kept in motion the feeble remnant of life. He lingered a day or two in a state approaching to insensibility; and then died.

This event struck with bitterness and indignation upon the heart-strings of Ralph. It aggravated twofold his own disappointed views; and gave him a kind of wild despair, that dangerously augmented the native irregularities of his mind.

He wandered about, sometimes received by his old friends from a generous sense of the bad treatment he had experienced from Burleigh; and sometimes

winning his way by the brilliance of his talents, and the eccentric flashes of a disordered intellect. Happening to be thrown into the company of the celebrated Robert Devereux Earl of Essex, that nobleman was caught by his manner, and a sort of occasional eloquence congenial to his own high spirit.

It will perhaps be deemed superfluous to give the character of this great and well known Peer. He had many weaknesses; and he rushed too rashly upon his own fate: but he had noble and attractive qualities, that reconcile us to all his faults. A sort of romantic spirit carried him forward to hope impossibilities: to despise caution: to overlook intrigue, baseness, and corruption; and to believe that grand intentions, and high and generous darings, would be crowned with success. Illus-

trious in descent ; adorned with many splendid mental and moral endowments ; lofty in titles and possessions ; taken early into the Queen's peculiar favour ; flattered from love, as well as from station ; his sanguine temper was inebriated by the fumes of prosperity , by which his entrance into life was surrounded .

I have already given two Sonnets of Spenser as confirmatory of the characters of two of the historical personages of my story before introduced . I will here add a third.

SONNET

*To the most honourable and excellent
Lord, the Earl of Essex, Great
Master of the Horse to her Highness,
and Knight of the most noble order
of the Garter, etc.*

Magnific Lord, whose virtues excellent
Do merit a most famous Poet's wit,
To be thy living praise's instrument;
Yet do not disdain to let thy name be writ
In this base poem, for thee far unfit:
Naught is thy praise disparaged thereby.
But when my Muse, whose feathers nothing flit,
Do yet but flag; and lowly learn to fly,
With bolder wing shall dare aloft to sty
To the last praises of this Fairy Queen;
Then shall it make more famous memory
Of thine heroic parts, such as they been.
Till then, vouchsafe thy noble countenance
To these first labours' needed furtherance!

EDMUND SPENSER

Lord Essex had at once a contempt and hatred of the Burleigh party . Their birth ; their moral , mental , and political qualities , were all odious to him . He was too generous to endeavour to extort from Ralph Willoughby a breach of confidence : but he listened eagerly to the import and colouring of Ralph's language ; and attentively weighed his opinions upon many subjects , on which a peculiar opportunity had been given him to form them at the fountain-head .

Some of the advisers and dependents who surrounded Essex were not as much pleased with Ralph , as their Chief was . They fancied that he partook too much of their Lord's defects ; and was therefore likely to encourage too much his openness , and imprudences . Anthony Bacon , the elder brother of the immortal Chan-

cellor, was amongst these. This man, though nearly allied to Cecil, was Essex's confidential friend. He had acute abilities; he was industrious; intriguing; and sagacious. He played secretly between the factions; and was not willing that his patron should know too much of the Cecils. There was also an unsought energy and eloquence about Ralph, which eclipsed the acute but studied precision, and deep, but somewhat too far-fetched, deductions of Bacon: and which Bacon disliked, and dreaded the more, because they were too congenial to his Master's natural taste.

Ralph was in too great a tumult of feelings to determine with his usual sagacity the exact value of the new society, into which he was thrown. A desperate man of high sensibility takes every occa-

sion to fly from reality : to count every moment of delusion, by which he can lull his fears and his regrets to sleep, as a gain; and to catch at every glimpse of light, that crosses the impenetrable blackness.

Instead of the cold, calculating system of Burleigh's House, which destroyed the charm of success itself, he found here in Lord Essex and such of his associates as were most congenial to him, a manner of thinking, that gilded defeat, and made victory doubly gratifying and glorious. It was a system rather for the heat of youth, and the bloom of life, than for the more chill contemplation of anxious age.

If Ralph loved poetry before, the flame of this divine spirit was doubly cherished in his bosom by the romantic.

manners of Essex's household. Here he found men of wit; men of learning; men of the world; voyagers; travellers; men of the Court; men of the Chase!

He could not believe, that the same characters could have been viewed in such opposite lights, as he now found they were. All the distinguished persons of the day were represented here in colours totally dissimilar to those, in which they had been described at the table of Burleigh. Sir Robert Cecil, Burleigh's younger son, with his associates, Northumberland, Raleigh, and Cobham, were covered with words either of foul calumny, or pitiful scorn.

Ralph could not always agree with these opinions; and he sometimes combated them ably, but candidly. With Cobham he was in some slight degree

connected; and Raleigh's splendid abilities, and heroic spirit, had won his admiration. With the family of Northumberland his own had been politically leagued; and to that had owed their misfortunes and ruin.

Northumberland appears to have owed his consequence rather to his rank than to his personal abilities. This is the light, in which Spenser seems to have viewed him.

SONNET

*To the Right Honourable, the Earl of
Northumberland.*

The sacred Muses have made always claim
 To be the nurses of Nobility,
 And registers of everlasting fame,
 To all, that arms profess, and chivalry :
 Then by like right the noble progeny,
 Which them succeed in fame and worth, are tied
 T' embrace the service of sweet poetry,
 By whose endeavours they are glorified;
 And eke from all, by whom it is envied,
 To patronize the author of their praise, (died;
 Which gives them life, that else would soon have
 And crowns their ashes with immortal bays.
 To thee therefore, right noble Lord, I send
 This present of my pains, it to defend .

EDMUND SPENSER

Sir Walter Raleigh is perhaps one of the most striking and interesting characters in British Biography. It is not easy to say any thing new of him. Many have doubted whether his ambition was sufficiently under the controul of nice principles of conscience. It is singular, that a great part of his poetry has been buried, and lost, among the *Anonymous* productions of his day. Some little pastoral pieces, for which he was celebrated, are still known to be his: and I have no doubt that to him belongs

Go, Soul, the Body's Guest,

though called in question by Mr. Campbell.

What can have become of his poem of *Cynthia*? It seems certain that it was never published.—I am not confident that Raleigh could have been a great

poet: he could have been at least a very ingenious one. From the whole structure and tone of Spenser's Sonnets, that Poet's testimony alone would have been sufficient to convince me of this.

SONNET

*To the right noble and valorous Knight,
Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Warden
of the Stanneries, and Lieutenant of
Cornwall .*

To thee, that art the Summer's nightingale,
Thy Sovereign Goddess's most dear delight,
Why do I send this rustic madrigal,
That may thy tuneful ear unseason quite?
Thou only fit this argument to write, (bower;
In whose high thoughts Pleasure hath built her
And dainty Love learn'd sweetly to indite?
My rhymes I know unsavoury and sour,
To taste the streams, that like a golden shower,
Flow from thy fruitful head, of thy love's praise;
Fitter perhaps to thunder martial store,
When so thee list thy lofty Muse to raise:
Yet till that thou *thy poem* wilt make known,
Let thy fair *Cynthia's* praises be thus rudely shown!

EDMUND SPENSER

It happened almost immediately after the defence which Ralph had made to the attacks on Northumberland and Raleigh, that he passed a fortnight in their company. Lord Cobham was Ralph's cousin. Tired of the smoke of London; weary of the uncertainty of his condition; perhaps disgusted by certain affronts or neglects put upon him by those of Essex's companions who were jealous of the growing favour, which the Earl shewed to him, he had wandered, scarcely knowing whither, in search of country air, and country quiet.

He found himself, in an hour or two, amid the furze and free breezes of Blackheath; and looking back upon the Capital, exclaimed, as Cowley exclaimed half a century afterwards: « Proud City, I pity thee! » — His heart had long

laboured with tumultuous passions : he was lost in deep musings; at length he became exhausted, and burst into tears .

~~He sat upon the trunk~~ of a tree, which had been lately felled: it was on the edge of the public road, that ran from the lower parts of Kent. He was so engrossed by his own contemplations, that he started when a voice addressed him, from one, who approached him so near as to touch his shoulder before he saw him.

It was Lord Cobham, journeying from his seat at Cobham-Hall, near Rochester, to the Capital. This nobleman, immediately recognizing him, addressed him with familiarity and kindness. « Ralph Willoughby » said he « what do you do here? and why so thoughtful? »--I am tired of the town, « answered he; « and seek for country quiet! »-- « Then go down to

Cobham. « replied Lord C. « there are Northumberland, and Raleigh and a cheerful party there; and I shall be back to-morrow morning! ,,

Ralph did not hesitate to accept the invitation. Before it was dark, he had already reached the Hall; and was courteously and gladly received by a Party who were delighted to see a new visitor, known to them by his talents, and great opportunities of information.

As Ralph had observed a vast difference in the style of conversation at the tables of Burleigh and Essex, he was not less impressed by the tone of that at Cobham, unlike either of them. It had nothing of the fervor of Essex: it had scarcely more of the cold, and deep, and profoundly-balanced reserve of Burleigh. The alternations of brilliant remark,

comprehensive knowlege, wit, sarcasm, raillery, pleasantry, of Raleigh, were admirable; and almost overcoming. Northumberland was a foil to him: he had a great sense of the superiority of his birth, rank, and possessions, and was always struggling to take advantage of it; but the mind of Raleigh overawed him.

It was part of Raleigh's temper to be imperious. He saw acutely; and he had a temper, which made it difficult to suppress the mention of what he saw. He had too little mercy for the defects, or foibles of others; and yet perhaps was a self deluder. His ambition was a scorching fire: almost too ardent to be pure.

When Cobham returned home the following day, Ralph Willoughby observed with some curiosity the manner, in which this nobleman was treated by his

guest. Cobham was weak, talkative, busy, intriguing and ambitious. He was of a family in this Country, not only ancient; but for many ages noble. His father had held high employments in the State; and had proved himself well-deserving of them. Raleigh always leagued himself with men of rank and connections: in an age, in which the roads to lofty preferment were scarce accessible to any other men, his proud pretensions saw the convenience, and even found the necessity of this.

Poor Cobham was a mere instrument, or play thing, in Raleigh's hands. It was painful to Ralph to be witness to the raillery, and ill-disguised contempt, with which Raleigh treated his noble relation. Cobham's excessive vanity filled his bosom with envy. There were two

noble families, not very distant neighbours of his, to whom he discovered a most jealous hatred; the Sackvilles of Knowle; and the Sydneys of Penshurst. The first was represented by a sublime Poet, of whom Raleigh himself felt an unworthy and ungenerous rivalry. This illustrious genius had also been thus celebrated by Spenser.

SONNET

*To the right honourable, the Lord of
Buckhurst, one of her Majesty's
Privy Council.*

In vain I think, right honourable Lord,
By this rude rhyme to memorize thy name,
Whose learned Muse hath writ her own record
In golden verse, worthy immortal fame:
Thou much more fit, (were leisure to the same,)
Thy gracious Sovereign's praises to compile;
And her imperial Majesty to frame
In lofty numbers, and heroic style!
But sith thou mayst not so, give leave awhile
To baser wit his power therein to spend,
Whose gross defaults thy dainty pen may file,
Aud unadvised oversights amend;
But evermore vouchsafe it to maintain
Against vile Zoilus' backbitings vain.

EDMUND SPENSER.

Lord Buckhurst, whom James I. afterwards created Earl of Dorset, in his early life appeared to the world as a great Poet, by his sublime *Induction* to the LEGEND of the *Duke of Buckingham*, inserted in the Second Edition of the Collection of Poetical Legends, called the *Mirror for Magistrates*, published at the commencement of Q. Elizabeth's reign. Being related to the Queen, on her mother's side, he was immediately on her accession, taken into favour at Court; and unfortunately for his future fame, forgot, in the Courtier, the higher occupations of the Muse. He does not appear to have mixed much with the factions of the time: and seems to have been more a man of prudence, at least in his latter days, than is usual with great poets. In his first

youth, as far as regards money, he had been a spend-thrift (*).

Raleigh paid an unwilling obeisance to the splendid talents, and lofty invention, of Buckhurst: but he complained of his courtly manners; and unadventurous habits. In truth, Buckhurst shunned Raleigh, as of another mould: but never ventured openly to offend him.

The rival House of *Sydney* had now lost its greatest ornament, Sir Philip, by a premature death. Ralph was an-

(*)*His old mansion at Buchkurst, in Sussex, was held for life, by his descendant, the late Lord George Germaine, Viscount Sackville, who died there: and is now the jointure house of the Duchess of Dorset.*

xious to hear Raleigh's opinion of this Phenomenon. — This severe estimator of the human character did not deny that Sir Philip was a luminary of extraordinary brilliance: but he said that his powers were not equal to his wishes; that he was somewhat of a precisian: and that he weakened his faculties by diffusion: and by an attempt at too universal excellence.

When Sir Philip's sister, the old Countess of Pembroke, was mentioned, Raleigh said that she was too stately, and cold; that her prejudices were too insufferably aristocratical, and that she had more learning, than genius.

Ralph answered mildly, that this was not Spenser's opinion; for that his Sonnet in her praise was one of the warmest of the whole set. Raleigh replied,

that some allowance must be made for the flattery, and over-coloured phrases even of the sincerest poets; and that Spenser's gratitude to her Brother, who was his earliest patron, might justify peculiar fervor of language. The following is Spenser's encomium.

SONNET

*To the right honourable, and most
virtuous Lady, the Countess of
Pembroke.*

Remembrance of that most heroic Spirit,
The Heaven's pride; the glory of our days; (rit
Which now triumpheth through immortal me
Of his brave virtues, crown'd with lasting bays ,
Of heavenly bliss, and everlasting praise ;
Who first my Muse did lift out of the floor,
To sing his sweet delights in lowly lays,
Bids me, most Noble Lady, to adore
His goodly image, living ever more
In the divine resemblance of your face:
Which with your virtues ye embellish more,
And native beauty deck with heavenly grace.
For his, and for your own especial sake, (take!
Vouchsafe from him this token in good part to

EDMUND SPENSER

If Ralph Willoughby could have otherwise forgotten the fame and splendor of Sir Philip Sydney, he had a daily memorial of it, while living in the House of Essex. This nobleman had married Sydney's widow; the daughter of Sir Francis Walsingham: a lady, who lived to obtain a third husband, (after having lost the first in battle; and the second, on a scaffold;) - the Marquis of Clanrickard.

Sir Francis Walsingham was also a Kentish man; and lived in the neighbourhood of Cobham-Hall. — His character as a Statesman in this reign stands high. I know not that he has left any proofs of genius: his political abilities were good: but abilities and genius are very dissimilar qualities. He does not seem to have had the

dislike of poetry, which was entertained by Burleigh. On the contrary, Spenser's pen has recorded, that he was a « Mécenas » of his age. He must not be defrauded of the honour of this eulogy. Who would not sacrifice much to be memorialized in such immortal words? His name has long passed from the living: yet it shall hover over us in brighter colours, than the living can enjoy!



SONNET

*To the right honourable, Sir Francis
Walsingham, Knight, principal
Secretary to her Majesty: and of
her honourable Privy Council.*

That Mantuan Poet's incompared spirit,
Whose girland now is set in highest place,
Had not Mecenas, for his worthy merit,
It first advanced to great Augustus' grace,
Might long perhaps have lien in silence base,
Ne been so much admired of later age.
Th is lowly Muse, that learns like steps to trace,
Flies for like aid unto your patronage,
That are the great Mecenas of this age,
As well to all that civil arts profess,
As those, that are inspired with martial rage;
And craves protection of her feebleness:
Which if ye yield, perhaps ye may her raise
In bigger tones to sound your living praise.

EDMUND SPENSER.

It was on the fifth day after Ralph's arrival at Cobham, that, on leaving his chamber in the morning, he perceived all the servants of the mansion in a bustle. More than ordinary preparations were making for the entertainment of the day. He found that the Lord Admiral, Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, was expected to dinner. Ralph was well acquainted with the character of this old man, whose pride and vanity were excessive; and who delighted in pomp. Cobham was willing to treat him in his own way; and light and foolish as he was himself, to play with the other's foibles.

His arrival was attended by his accustomed pageantry: and he loaded the company, according to their rank, with a profusion of compliments. To

the Earl of Northumberland, above all, he was entire devotion. The mode, in which he addressed Raleigh was sufficiently ridiculous to bye-standers of acute observation. He considered Raleigh as a new man and an upstart; — but in spite of the unbounded insolence of a puny mind, inebriated with prosperity and honours, yet always endeavouring to disguise it under the thin veil of a fulsome civility, he trembled, and sunk before the daring eye, and undaunted courage of Raleigh.

His person had been very handsome; his heroism had been displayed in the defeat of the Spanish Armada. These are the topics on which Spenser judiciously seized, as the foundation of his panegyric.

SONNET

*To the right honourable, the Lord
Ch. Howard, High Admiral of Eng-
land, Knight of the noble order of
Garter, and one of her Majesty's
Privy Council, etc.*

And ye, brave Lord, whose goodly personage,
And uoble deeds, each other garnishing,
Make you ensample to the present age
Of th' old heroës, whose famous offspring
The antique poets wont so much to sing,
In this same pageant have a worthy place;
Sith those same Castles (a) of Castilian King,
That vainly threatened Kingdoms to displace,
Like flying doves, ye did before you chase:
And that proud People, woxen insolent
Through many victories, did first deface;
Thy praise's everlasting monument
Is in this verse engraven semblably;
That it may live to all posterity.

EDMUND SPENSER.

(a) *The Spanish Armada.*

Raleigh had been more than once under his command; but considered him, as a mere feather, put for shew at the head of the expeditions.

The Lord Admiral quitted Cobham the next morning: and Ralph was now left to Raleigh's manœuvres.

Raleigh had a strong desire to make use of Ralph for a double purpose. He thought he could sift out of him some of the secrets both of the Houses of Burleigh, and Essex. He mistook the nature as well of Ralph's understanding, as of his disposition. He affected to take Ralph into his confidence; and to display to him some of the treasures of his mind.

He found in this youthful pupil an extent of profound observation, at which he was astonished. Never off his guard,

yet sometimes breaking into bursts of copious eloquence, he was equal to the Master that would probe him; because he had tasked his abilities to meet the occasion, of which he fully perceived the danger.

The effect upon Raleigh's opinions was the reverse of what he had expected. He could discover nothing from the Penetrabilia of the Statesmen, whose secrets he desired to know, but what was wise, honourable, and generous.

On the other hand, Ralph felt his veneration for Raleigh a little diminished. He said to himself « there is sometimes a finesse in what this great man says, that clouds its force, and renders its wisdom doubtful. Truth, and *vigue*, and simplicity, are the only sources of genuine eloquence;

and can alone bring with them any lasting persuasion, or conviction. The brilliance of distorted ingenuity soon ceases to please : and in a little time disgusts. Raleigh has too exclusive a confidence in himself: he would monopolize all favour; and is too apt to think no other man capable of properly governing the State. I do not love Burleigh: I never could love him: I have now, alas, too much reason to hate him! — But I am not insensible to his numerous statesman-like qualities. To Essex Raleigh is still less excusable in his bitterness: nor does he duly estimate the talents, or the heart of this amiable, but imprudent nobleman. »

Raleigh communicated to Ralph some political secrets, real or pretended, to which Ralph's understanding and

intelligence were little inclined to give full credit. The most surprising thing to him was Raleigh's pretension to the confidence of Sir Robert Cecil, Burleigh's favourite son. He did not dare tell Raleigh that he was a dupe; nor could he altogether bring himself to think that he was in fact so. But if Raleigh was sincere and accurate in his relations, he could not be otherwise. Sometimes the most cunning men overreach themselves; and are the victims of those, whom they would deceive.

At this time there were numerous, busy and conflicting intrigues going on with the Scotch Monarch. Raleigh thought that he had played his part so well as to be secure of the King's favour, when he should ascend the British throne. Ralph smiled, from a knowlege

that the same confidence was entertained by the opposite parties of Burleigh , and of Essex.

It was one of Raleigh's purposes to persuade Ralph to undertake a secret commission to the Scotch Court . This proposal was received by him with coldness and dislike . He had been too much behind the curtain; and he knew too well the difficulty of such a task . He had had peculiar opportunities of becoming acquainted with the character of King James. He had discovered that this Prince was fickle, pusillanimous, deceitful; and that from a pedantic turn of intellect he was ignorant how to deal with mankind; and was always likely to sacrifice those, who had any transactions with him .

He expressed these opinions cautiously

to Raleigh, who smiled with a sort of gentle and suppressed contempt at his suspicions ; as if sure of his own arrangements ; and exulting in his prospective wisdom . « Such « said Ralph to himself « is human blindness in the most highly gifted ! »

Sir Robert Cecil, who knew all that was going forward wherever active spirits were met together, had intelligence of Ralph's arrival at Cobham, before he had been there twenty four hours . He was not well pleased at this rencontre with Raleigh, and had a spy in Cobham's house, who conveyed to him, with a great deal of misconstruction, several of the conversations, which had passed between these two .

Cecil had kept up some outward appearance of friendship with Ralph,

notwithstanding the rupture with his father . He was well assured of Ralph's rectitude of principles : but he could not believe him a match for the searching capacity , and long and varied experience of Raleigh . He felt that Ralph could communicate many things, of which the discovery to Raleigh might be ruin to himself.

Ralph's mind was now in a tumult from the variety of new observations, that had forced themselves upon him. Active life seemed to be a chaos of conflicting elements. He felt a desire for a short solitude , that he might have an opportunity of digesting his remarks . He quitted Cobham ; and retired to a cottage in Whichwood Forest , with which he had become

acquainted in one of his excursions with Lord Essex .

The first escape from the disgust , or restraint of artificial society, into free air; and silence, and the beautiful scenes of Nature , is exultation , and unmingled delight . Then come regret at time lost ; anger at ambitious desires, at once unvirtuous and painful ; and vows never again to wander beyond the paths of obscure content . The mists began to disperse from the objects of the mind, which had obtruded themselves with such clouded force upon his imagination . « Grandeur, » said he, « is not the path of virtue . Success and a pure conscience are incompatible . It is intrigue; and plot that succeeds : and he, who unites the most audacity

with the deepest design wins the game. From Burleigh to Essex; from Essex to Raleigh, it is all a bed of thorns. Restless and incessant caution; indignant resentment; scornful pretensions; and overweening confidence!

« It seems to me madness in him, who can command a competence, to embark on these troubled oceans. It is for our posterity alone, that we feel the stimulus of emerging from obscurity. If I could resolve to lead a single life, I should have no hesitation to restrain myself for the remainder of my days to a literary solitude. I could create a Paradise for myself; and the wealth of the mind should outshine that of courts and palaces. But, oh, the contradiction of human wishes! The soft eyes of this cottage-girl, the daughter of

my host, tell me , that singleness is not the life for me! « Fair Rosalinde; why lookest thou so archly and so sweetly upon one, who would close his eyes and his heart against tender impressions! Thy cunning sees that I admire that blooming face; and those young hopes, which have yet received no chill! — »

He spent a fortnight in rambling about the wildest paths of the forest . He formed a thousand romantic schemes of a life to be dedicated to study , and composition . He endeavoured to forget the rank of his ancestors; and the habits of activity and peril, in which they had passed their days .

At this time Sir Henry Wotton wrote to him a letter from Essex-House, expressed in dark and enigmatical terms, hinting at the dangerous course of con-

duct, which the Earl was pursuing: and intimating the rashness, with which he involved his partisans in the chance of ruin. Ralph lamented, but was not surprised at this intelligence. He congratulated himself on his distance from this scene of action; and on the comparative quiet and safety he was now enjoying.

A long walk occupied by a profound and painful meditation on the imprudences and probable fate of Essex, whom with all his errors and excesses he loved and admired, had so overcome him, that when he returned to his humble apartment in the cottage, he fell asleep. The vision of Essex appeared to him. He looked pale as death: his neck was open; and stained with blood: he shook his disheveled locks; and casting on him a reproachful glance, cried:

« Ralph Willoughby! why desert me in my troubles? It becomes not a generous mind to fly from the field of danger! Skulk not in the woods, when the plain of battle is open to thy heroic spirit! »
 A blast shrieked across the forest; the vision fled; and Ralph awoke! —

He opened his eyes: a lovely figure stood by his side: a gentle voice enquired, if he was ill.—It was Rosalinde. « Why ill, Rosalinde! » asked he. « O Sir! » she answered; « you sighed, and muttered so loud, that we heard it in the next apartment! and when I entered the room, you shook so, and the dew-drops sat so full upon your forehead, that you seemed to be in the height of a fever! » « It was only a dream, Rosalinde, that disturbed me! » replied Ralph. — « But need we not regard dreams,

Sir? » exclaimed Rosalinde . « They are the mere gambols of the Faucy , Rosalinde ! » he cried : « but sometimes they are grave, and dreadful gambols ! » — « They are only gambols then ? » she said : « Oh, how I rejoice , that they are only gambols : for I sometimes dream such melancholy things ? » — « Why , what dream you , Rosalinde ? » — « Oh, I dreamed last night , that some great Lord had persuaded you to go with him upon a hazardous adventure ; and that you was taken prisoner ; thrown into a dungeon ; condemned to death ; and lost your head upon a block ? » — « And would you have grieved for that , Rosalinde ? » — She blushed ; and dropped a tear . Ralph kissed it from her cheek .

Ralph was not superstitious ; but this dream made a strong impression upon

him . He was not satisfied, that it was generous or honourable to keep entirely aloof, if there was any chance that his advice, or other aid, could be of the least use to Essex . But Wotton's Letter left him under great difficulty how to solve many of its hints .

Sir Henry Wotton was a man of very acute abilities ; erudition ; considerable genius ; and many excellent moral qualities . The late admirably-informed Thomas Warton has pronounced him a mixed character . It seems as if he wanted firmness, magnanimity, and directness of conduct . This sometimes involved him in the appearance, and perhaps the reality , of finesse, and duplicity . There is in many of his writings something of a turn allied to this : a cloudiness , and pedantry of thought, and phrase, of which the shackles

are intolerable to a bold genius. Quaintness of language to a mind of native force is as ill suited and injurious as an enamel of paint put to cover the bloom of nature.

But in the contemplations of the closet Wotton had a pure and exalted mind, Old Isaac Walton has written his life with such admirable naivetè, and in colours so very interesting, that few characters are remembered with more fondness than that of this celebrated Statesman. The Wottons were an ancient, and considerable Kentish family, whose mansion was at Boughton-Malherb a few miles from Maidstone. Sir Henry died, an old man, in the reign of Charles I. Provost of Eton College, where he had been educated. Walton has recorded a most eloquent passage expressive of his feelings on revisiting this scene of the

sports of his boyhood: and which in a most striking manner anticipates the strain and course of thought of Gray's beautiful « *Ode on the Prospect of Eton College.* » I do not mean that Gray borrowed from it: it was the coincidence of truth and nature. Sir Henry wrote elegant poetry, full of touching sentiment; and marked by terse and graceful expression. His lines on his favourite patroness, the unfortunate Queen of Bohemia, daughter of K. James I. beginning:

Ye meaner Beauties of the Night,
have lost nothing of their exquisite and tender polish by the lapse of time.

Ralph knew Wotton's character well: he had penetrated into his foibles; he lamented his defects; he admired his endowments, and virtues. He was sure that the intelligence conveyed to him

imported some great evil; he could not unravel exactly what.

Again he resolved to bury himself in the safe obscurity, which he had now found. He had not been an original partisan of Essex: he was bound to him by no long, or deep ties: he was not an approver of his politics: he hated all intrigue, and plot; and active and feverish ambition: he did not like the greater part of Essex's advisers: he could not rely upon them: he felt assured, that if he interfered, he himself, whenever danger occurred, would be the first sacrifice.

He rambled into the Forest, and sat for hours beside the woodmen at their work. In these solitudes almost every distant sound is music. The crashing fall of the heavy tree, when it yields to the last stroke of the axe; the echo of each

blow of the axe itself; the occasional voices of the workmen; now and then the loud burst of a song; sometimes the tongue of an hound; the reverberating hallow of a Keeper; or a few shrill notes of his horn, rouse the senses; and set the imagination into play.

When we consider what life is: when we seek, (as all seek,) next to duty, what is the most pleasant, we must pronounce pleasures of this kind, as they are the most innocent, to be among the most acute, of which our Being is capable. Why then should we go farther to search for others, that, while they are far less exquisite, are bought at the price of innumerable perils, and contingent ruin? There is nothing in courts, in rank, in high office, that when the novelty is gone, can confer much En-

joyment! - Health is the first of blessings: and where is it to be found but in easy occupation in the open and uncontaminated air?

The pages of history prove the misery of lofty station. Look at the tales of sovereigns, and princes. How few have descended to the grave in peace! What numbers have come to premature and violent deaths, after long torments of body and mind!

« Why then, » said Ralph, « should I abandon these haunts of silence and quiet? Why should I embark with open eyes on a tempestuous ocean, to which no duty calls me? Forgetting and forgotten, let me find a rural path to the tomb! let me forget my name; and the busy characters of my ancestors! let Poetry be my mistress; and let innocent labour

in fields and forests deepen my slumbers !

He had scarcely whispered to himself these sentiments, when there issued from the narrow path of an adjoining thicket a figure very unlike the costume of the inhabitants of these sylvan domains . He looked ; and recognized the person of the young Lord Grey of Wilton,

« What brings you hither, Lord Grey ? » cried Ralph . « Business with you ! » answered he with a smile : « I have been traversing the whole country in search of you ; and have found you by the merest accident ! » Ralph felt his heart sink, while his curiosity was enflamed.

Lord Grey went on : « I am sent by Raleigh on some confidential matters . He says that it is an affair of delicacy ; and that no one has talents for it, but

u. He speaks in the highest terms of your extraordinary abilities ; and says that it may open to you the road to honours, and promotion, which you deserve ! » —

The young Lord Grey had succeeded his father, the celebrated Arthur, Lord Grey of Wilton, who had been Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In that station Raleigh, when a young man with only the command of a company, had had a quarrel with him, in which he had made his own part so good, that it had first brought him into the Queen's notice.

Raleigh had cast away the early animosity created by this circumstance; and had insinuated himself into the favour of this heir to the honours of his old Opponent. He found the juvenile Peer useful to some of the schemes he was

carrying on ; as he was ill-inclined to the Court, being tinged with the sour principles of the Puritan Faction .

Ralph lamented the austere and forbidding turn, which this heir to illustrious honours, vevorable by so many centuries of rank and heroism, had taken : He had often reasoned with him ; and endeavoured to infuse into him his fàthers's better taste ; his generous love of poetry ; and his loyal heroism . He spoke to him of the deathless fame , which the Muse had given to this honoured Parent ; and repeated to him Spenser's Eulogy .



SONNET

*To the most renowned and valiant
Lord, the Lord Grey of Wilton,
Knight of the noble Order of the
Garter, etc.*

Most noble Lord, the pillar of my life,
And patron of my Muse's pupillage,
Through whose large bounty, poured on me rife,
In the first season of my feeble age,
I now do live, bound yours by vassalage:
Since nothing ever may-redeem, nor reeve
Out of your endless debt so sure a gage;
Vouchsafe in worth this small gift to receive,
Which in your noble hands for pledge I leave
Of all the rest, that I am tied t' account;
Rude rhymes, the which a rustic Muse did weave
In savage soil, far from Parnasso Mount;
And roughly wrought in an unlearned loom: (doom
The which vouchsafe, dear Lord, your favourable

EDMUND SPENSER

When Lord Grey came to communicate the message from Raleigh, he found himself so embarrassed, that, as Ralph was not in a disposition to give him much encouragement, he could scarcely make himself intelligible. It was clear, that, had Ralph been inclined to take hints, he would have had much more to say. The purport was a private and confidential conference with Sir Robert Cecil, upon hints from Raleigh: of which Lord Grey had memoranda in his pocket. From the very opening of this message Ralph felt such a distaste to it, that the messenger could not bring himself to disclose more than a very small part of it. Ralph perceived that it had reference to what was going on at Essex-House; and would hear no more.

Lord Grey became furiously angry:

he reproached Ralph with obstinacy; self-sufficiency; and wilful blindness to his own fortune. « My Lord? » said Ralph: « you are in possession of an ancient peerage: — I am not: but I know not that my family is much inferior to your own! — they have been less fortunate! but will you yourself venture to rely on prosperity as the test of merit? — I am to be won by kindness: but I am not to be driven! If nature has given me the talent to judge for myself, there is nothing in my apparently-desperate condition, that should take it away! I thank you for wishing to promote my interest: I intreat that you will leave to me my own manner of doing it! — And now, Lord Grey, I must bring myself, even with you by a reciprocity of advice! — A little more of the softness of what are called the

lighter ornaments of the mind, would be of service to you. — You have too much of a hard, resentful ambition. Beware, that you are not the victim of your own projects! Providence has given a vast diversity to the human character. All have not the same duties: nor must we judge severely of others, because they are not like ourselves. If a man of genius flatters you with an exclusive commendation of your own cast of disposition, or intellect, suspect him! he is not sincere; he is bending you, as an instrument, to his own designs! Do not play the game of the common enemy! Faction against Faction; Ancient House against Ancient House, is very bad policy! » —

« Willoughby! » exclaimed Lord Grey in surprise: « Willoughby! what,

can all this mean? Can I trust my own ears? Are these your sentiments? Is this your principle of action? Has not the solitude of this Forest worked wonderful changes? Ralph Willoughby — the confidential secretary of Burleigh; the friend of Essex; the companion of Raleigh! Does Ralph hate ambition? does Ralph shun the strife of parties? does Ralph fly from Faction? Miraculous conversion! all powerful influence of the charms of woods, and cottages. » —

« You are only confirming the accuracy of my advice, Lord Grey, » said Ralph, « by this reply! You take too narrow a view of things. Misled by your own desires, you have supposed me to have been actuated by the same feelings. I always hated Faction and Intrigue: I always hated the sort of ambition, by

which you suppose me to have been stimulated ! I have heard the stories of opposite Parties ; but I would die rather than betray one to another, even in return for the most cruel and ungrateful treatment ! Let your friend ; (I hope *my* friend,) Raleigh, tell what he has learned from me ! My heart is open ; my prudence and caution are not great : but my sense of honour is a substitute for these guards !

« Raleigh then misunderstands your character ! » exclaimed Lord Grey drily. « I am sorry that my character is not more visible to an acute observer ! » replied he. I hate disguise ; and would have every one see me, as I am ! « -- « It is clear, that Raleigh thinks you a politician ! » said Lord G. -- « An intriguer ; you mean ! » cried Ralph : » but should

you not rather say, that he wishes to make me one? « --

« I admit, » said the other, “that he has an high confidence in his own power: and shall Ralph Willoughby be bold enough to set him at defiance? ”

Forbear this taunt. Lord Grey! » replied Ralph: « I have neither defied, nor undervalued Sir Walter Raleigh. But you would make a despot of him. It is not arrogance, to retain one’s independence of mind. The career of ambition, that suits his daring genius, may not suit my humbler temper. There are men, who delight to

„Ride in the whirlwind; and direct the blast: „ but this is not congenial to my feebler spirit. « --

« Though Raleigh has an high opinion of your abilities, » proceeded Lord G.

« he has not overlooked some defects, which he thinks may mar your career . He says, that you consider poetry too much of a business, rather than a mere ornament : he asserts, that this Enchanter ought to be taken as a mistress only; not as a wife : she may be dallied with ; but not your constant companion . »

« I certainly cannot subscribe to these sentiments: » said Ralph eagerly . It is from this very principle, that I believe Raleigh has failed in his poetical character. Truth is as much the essence of genuine Poetry, as it is of genuine Philosophy. If it be not the expression of real feelings; or of images really presented to the mind , it may please for a time by novelty and marvel : but it will soon be forgotten . This is incontestably proved by an examination of the distinctive

merit of those ancient classical poets, whose fame has lasted longest. Art should be subordinate to the exhibition of Nature; not paramount to it. The imagination creates innumerable things, which exist not materially: but when it creates voluntarily, it always creates according to some uniform principle, by which a sympathy is found in the bosom of every reader. The monsters of the fancy, its forced and extravagant combinations, are odious to good taste. » --

« Am I then to understand you « continued Lord G. with a sneer, « that you abandon all for this Syren Poetry? -- or perhaps for the little blue-eyed girl of the cottage, that for the moment takes her place! «

« Leave me to myself, Lord Grey. »

cried Ralph angrily. « I have never interfered with you . »

« What am I to tell Raleigh then? »

« That I thank him for his good opinion: -- but that I am unequal to the task he proposes for me . » --

« I submit, » said Lord Grey: “ but remember , that Raleigh would be a dangerous enemy.

« Do not use threats, let us part in good humour ! threats, of all things , are most abhorrent to my patience ! Be candid Lord Grey ! Open your mind to a greater variety of views of human affairs ! cultivate the poetry you despise : it will make your blood flow in kindlier currents : it will give you a resting-place in disappointment : it will set you *above* the things you cannot command ; not in a degrading struggle with them ! » --

Lord Grey turned his eyes earnestly on Ralph: a strange novelty of sentiment glowed through his whole frame: he began to suspect that he had been groveling in a wrong path; and that there was a communicable fire in Ralph, of which he had had no conception. Ralph saw that he had made an impression.

« Lord Grey! », exclaimed he; « I cannot forget the illustrious blood, from whence you are sprung! That generous stream may be chilled, or frozen for a moment! -- Misfortunes may arrest it: clouds may envelop it: but its warmth will return; its noble flame will never die! Thou canst not forget, that Spenser dandled thee on his knee! Thou canst not forget, with what enthusiasm thy heroic father listened to his strains! He knew well the charm, and the force of

verse : he felt assured of its alliance to all the nobler impulses , that animate human actions ; and esteemed rank base, and honours to be mockery, if unaccompanied by an ardent, melting heart , and refined and highly-instructed intellect ! Though riches were not showered upon him, the absence of this advantage did not make him discontented ; but full of noble adventure! ,,

Lord Grey sighed and turned pale : a sensation of self-abasement was mingled with his pleasure at this glowing eulogy of his Father : to whom he looked up not merely with vanity, but with veneration . But it had certainly not hitherto produced the effects upon him , which Ralph wished to instil .

“ Well then Willoughby. ,, he continued : “ may you be happy in the

path of your own choice! And I will endeavour to take lessons from you: for I see that I cannot contend with you! I will deliver your message to Raleigh; and use my efforts to persuade him, that you yourself are the best judge of what you can undertake with success! ,

They took leave. Ralph was now again left to his own contemplations. He exulted at the decisive and indignant manner, in which he had rejected the odious proposition. To be the bearer of any intelligence, by which he might be the instrument of injuring Essex with the persons in power, was the last act of baseness, of which he would have been guilty. To him the course of intrigue adopted by the Faction of Cobham Hall was quite inexplicable, when he considered the principles of action, by which he

privately knew Sir Robert Cecil to be guided.

He had now leisure for musings even beyond the endurance of a mind morbidly endued with moral plaintiveness. He recollected that, in consequence of the fallen fortunes of his family, he had not even a competence to subsist upon. He farther considered, that he was in dangerous society. Left to contemplate without interruption the beauty of the simple Rosalinde he could not trust his warm heart to avoid an alliance, that would aggravate his difficulties tenfold.

He thought, till he was sick and despondent: every thing was dark around him: he saw not a vista of hope, but in the fields of Fancy. At length it occurred to him, that his enterprising spirit might find some scope in those expeditions.

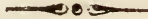
of Naval discovery , that were now so fashionable .

About two years past, he had formed an intimacy with the chivalrous George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, who being one of the proudest flowers of the old nobility, had forsaken Courts of which he was the ornament, and ancient castles, and spreading territories, where he presided in the most gratifying feudal pomp, and had left all the enjoyments of domestic ease, for the perils of the ocean, and the conflicts of barbarous tribes , in search of New Worlds .

He was a man of an high enthusiasm ; and an accomplished genius . He excelled in all manly exercises: he carried away the palm in tournaments: his gallantry made him a general favorite among the ladies of

the Court : and he wrote amatory verses with elegance, and pathos .

The following is Spenser's testimony . It seems to have been written in the commencement of this Earl's career.



SONNET

*To the right honourable, the Earl
of Cumberland.*

Redoubted Lord, in whose courageous mind
The flower of Chivalry, now blooming fair,
Doth promise fruit, worthy the noble Kind,
Which of their praises have left you the heir;
To you this humble present I prepare,
For love of virtue, and of martial praise,
To which though nobly ye inclined are,
As goodly well ye shew'd in late assays,
Yet brave ensample of long passed days,
In which true honour ye may fashion'd see,
To like desire of honour may ye raise;
And fill your mind with magnanimity.
Receive it, Lord, therefore, as it was meant,
For honour of your name, and high descent.

EDMUND SPENSER

Ralph now sought out this Earl, who was already preparing for another naval expedition. The accomplished Commander was delighted to have such a companion as Ralph; who went with him to Plymouth, where his little Fleet was assembled, laying in stores for their voyage.

On their arrival at this station, they found every thing in confusion; the vessels half equipped; half victualled; half manned; a mingled discontent running through those, who were already embarked; the captains ill-furnished; and ill-credited; and the aspect of the whole discouraging.

Lord Cumberland was one of those men, who easily yeild to the alternate impressions of hope and gloom. He sunk at the clouded prospect, which met him:

but then he had an elasticity of mind, which danger and discouragement by degrees stimulated. He talked with the bolder Spirits, who had resolved to join his adventure; he enflamed his imagination with the novel incidents he expected to meet with; while the stale repetition of Court parade appeared a scene, at which he revolted to return.

But though he had a large feudal territory, his means in ready money were very scanty. After a fortnight's vexatious delay, he found the difficulty of procuring all necessaries augment rather than diminish.

Meantime it was resolved that a chosen set should go forward in the best vessel. Ralph Willoughby intreated to be allowed to accompany this first adventure. He was tired of England; every path,

seemed shut to him; and nothing appeared to remain there, but mortification, poverty, and dereliction.

A fair wind arose: the destined Ship expanded her broad wings; and moved majestically forward upon the bosom of the swelling ocean. Ralph sat on the prow; and looked back on the lessening shore without a sigh.

White shores, now dimly seen, now shining bright
 Beneath the glitter of the radiant Sun,
 Lessen; ah lessen! not a sigh from me
 Shall honour your ungracious, heartless smiles!
 Cold as the Moon, when her pale dewy beams
 Throw on the shrubs and flowers their misty light,
 Is the fair splendor of your guileful rays!
 Ye cherish him, who needeth not your aid:
 But when misfortune comes, or clouds arise,
 Then, where your smiles are wanted, how ye frown!
 Wealth is your idol. Ye pretend to laud
 Birth, Genius, Virtue: - when array'd in gold,
 'Tis true ye worship them: but 'tis the dress

Calls forth your reverence: if meanly clad,
 Birth, Genius, Virtue, bright as heaven, may starve!
 Where art thou, Spenser? Thy diviner tongue
 Sleeps silent in the grave: thy sounding lyre
 Kept not the gripe of Poverty from thee!
 For all the glory that thy copious song
 Pour'd on the Great, what did they pour on thee?
 A scanty sterile praise: a side-long glance,
 That own'd with envious doubtful looks the worth
 Of thy all-blazing Muse! and seem'd to say,
 "Song is but empty sound: and small the meed,
 That empty sounds can merit!,, It is thus;
 Isle of the Ocean, it is thus thou deal'st
 With Fancy's children! Future Centuries
 Shall see thee still the same! and boys shall rise,
 And fill the woods and vallies with the stream
 Of their o'erwhelming music: yet in grief
 Their early sun shall set; and Scorn shall grin
 Upon their inspiration; and Despair
 Shall drive them to the poisonous bowl; and end
 Pangs not-to-be-endured in self sought death!(1)

(1) Alluding to Chatterton.

O drop thy veil, Futurity! O close
 Mine ears to those heart-rending yells! Along
 High-vaulted aisles, I hear the piercing cry
 Of furious Madness! Back again the shrieks
 Echo, and then redouble! (2) Fated Lyre;
 If this be thy reward, I throw thee off!
 Snatch it, ye Winds! Bury it deep ye Waves,
 In your profoundest beds: and let its charms,
 Accursed and accursing like a fiend,
 Lull me no more to such ineffable ills. (ples
 Blow fresh, thou Breeze: upon my beating tem-
 Play; and hang close with thy refreshing wings
 On my tumultuous breast.-Again the light
 Sits on old Albion's shores. The genial beams,
 Whom do they cherish?-Not an heart that beats
 For my misfortunes! Not an eye, that looks
 With fond regret on my departing form!
 'One lingering remnant of those ancient stocks
 Of feudal nobles fled! tis well! tis gain
 To us: we strip the branches; tear the leaves;
 And soon the last writhed Stock, tho'deep its root,

(2) *Alluding to the fate of Collins.*

Shall wither in the ground! , - Thus speak the
 crowd (cries
 Of new sprung Great ! Thus swelling Commerce
 Deeming, where wealth is not all-powerful, there
 Worth is defrauded of its rights, and this
 The lore, the half-faught Sage affects to teach !
 Gay dancing Bark, bear onward ! The dim line
 Of Albion's coast along the horizon marks,
 Where all my hopes were wreck'd ! - O far away
 Bear me to scenes, in whose oblivious breast
 Memory may bury her impatient woes !

It fades : the last dim speck evaporates ;
 And mingles with the sky ! Farewell, o Land ; -
 Soil of my Fathers ; mine, alas, no more ! -

Thus mused Ralph Willoughby, as
 the Ship gradually bore him out of the
 sight of the English coast .

He felt for four days a revival of spi-
 rits from the new situation, in which he
 was placed, and the new objects, by
 which he was surrounded. The fresh air of
 the Ocean invigorated his languid frame .

On the fifth day the seamen were observed to be particularly watchful of the sky. The weather was very changeable: sometimes sudden clouds, gathered into mountains, hung with tremendous blackness over the sea; and then, as suddenly dispersing, gave way to as clear, and beautiful a brilliance. Again a gloom would overspread the heavens; every breeze seemed to sleep; all was still; an awful silence reigned; till at length a hollow murmur swept along the sky, and then ceased again.

Ralph spoke to the Captain. He shook his head; and intimated that a storm was brooding.

The Sun set with a fiery red; and the sailors beheld it wistfully, and with terror. Ralph retired to his hammock at the usual hour; and fell into a profound

sleep. Long before midnight, he was waked by the rolling of the vessel. The wind roared frightfully among the shrouds; and a great bustle was heard upon deck. Then came a crash, as if the ship was going to pieces. He scarce had time to reflect where he was, when another crash came. The Ship had been driven among the rocks on the Cornish coast.

He had scarcely time to reach the deck, when all was lost. Another crash; and the Vessel went down. All was then confusion: Every one strove to attempt the shore; which some distant lights seemed to point out. Ralph, whether in a boat, or on an oar, he afterwards knew not, was, by some Providence, thrown upon the coast.

His senses were gone; and he recollected nothing, till he found himself on the

bed of a gloomy chamber in a strange house, so weak that he could not lift himself from his position; and so full of bruises, that he could scarcely take any posture without agony.

He soon relapsed into sleep from mere debility; and when he waked again, his eyes opened upon two female attendants, who softly expressed their anxiety for his recovery. « To whom am I obliged » said he, « for this preservation, and hospitality? » —The Lady smiled; (for they were evidently a lady, and her servant:) « If you feel obliged, » she cried; « I am content: my name, I fear, will add nothing to the value of the service I have been happy to perform in the cause of humanity! It is to this good girl, that you owe as much, as to me. Her father found you apparently almost lifeless on

the shore; but perceiving a spark of animation still about you, brought you to his cottage. His daughter sought my assistance; and I had you conveyed hither. » —

They soon observed, that Ralph's strength was not sufficient to bear a continuance of this narration. He grew pale; his senses again fled; and he sunk exhausted upon the pillow. A fortnight's assiduous attention of these kind nurses restored him to his senses, and to some slight portion of a feeble convalescence.

He had learned that the lady's name was *Tretagel*: and that she was the only child of a little indigenious Cornish Squire, who lived in his small half-castellated manorial house on this remote and barbarous coast. Some pains had been taken with her education; and she

had assiduously cultivated a quick understanding, and warm fancy, according to the fashion of those days.

She was handsome; with dark eyes; and a clear brown complexion; but somewhat too large in her person. By some accident; probably by some papers found in his pocket; she well knew Ralph's name; and was able to connect him with his father's family; of which she had heard something of the history.

Alone; nursing a romantic imagination in a desolate country, her bosom nourished towards Willoughby all the wild energies of a sudden and unmanaged passion. Ralph felt gratitude; but he could not feel love.

Maud Tretagel was one, whose affection was not to be sported with. She was vain; proud; jealous; resentful, even

to madness. When Ralph hinted at the necessity of his departure, she first flew into tears; then grew gloomy; then reproachful; and at last furious.

Her maid was a much more rational Being. She made many apologies for her mistress; she said, that she had been a spoiled child; that her father was the little despot of a wild neighbourhood; and that he knew no controul to his will; and had brought up his child to know no controul to hers. She entreated Ralph to bear with her humours; and to soothe her pride.

Such apologies had no tendency to reconcile Ralph to her passion. He only meditated his departure with more eagerness. When Maud Tretagel suspected this, she used every artifice to delay him. At length she expressed herself

reconciled to it, on condition that he would wait till a particular day.

In the mean time she fell into a moody gloom, that almost overcame the sensibility of Ralph. Her maid was continually in tears: she started: she seemed to have something to communicate; yet not to dare to trust her voice. On the morning before that appointed for the day of his departure, she came into his apartment at a very early hour, pale, trembling, and bathed in tears. She looked around her fearfully; she bolted the door; she came to his bedside; and whispered in a faltering voice: « Mr. Willoughby! my conscience impels me at the risk of my life to impart a secret to you! You are not safe here! Depart secretly to night; or you are lost! Take the hint! betray me not! Go: haste! the shades of

this very night alone can save you ! » — She stole out of the room; and left Willoughby to reflect, in horrid astonishment, at the communication .

He resolved to obey the caution : for he could not doubt , where the danger lay . When the mantle of Evening came, he stole out of the House ; and wandered, in the only road he could find, as far as his enfeebled strength would carry him . At length he was so exhausted, that he resolved to throw himself on the road-side ; and yield to his fate . Luckily the gleam of a distant light at that moment met his eye . He crawled towards it ; and found it a small public-house, where he gained admittance .

His sole desire was rest ; if it brought with it death, he was now indifferent to

it. He had luckily preserved two or three small pieces of gold in the only remnant of his dress, that had not been torn from him. He recollected this before he closed his eyes; and was consoled, that he should be able to pay for his entertainment.

He waked refreshed in the morning; and resolved to proceed on his journey. But some conversation, which he overheard, induced a suspicion that he would be way-laid. The precaution of a change of dress occurred to him; and passing a village, he entered small shop, where he found no difficulty in procuring a common sailor's jacket. Pulling off the outward dress, with which he had been furnished at the house of the Tretagels, wrapping it in an handkerchief; and slinging it over his should-

er by a rough stick taken from the hedges, he trudged along in the disguise of one of the meanest class of society.

For a few miles he flattered himself, that his strength had rapidly revived: but at last he began to grow faint: he sat down: a dimness came before his eyes; and his senses began to wander. He thought he saw the waves of the sea approaching him in mountainous height; and heard the roaring of the billows; and the groans of the sails and masts

He rose; and endeavoured to run; but his legs failed him. A charitable peasant, seeing his feebleness and sick looks, took him in his cart; and delivered him to the hostess of the next town. He was carried, unconscious, to the hospital, that luckily existed there. The managers of this establishment could gather nothing

coherent from his conversation His mind and his tongue rambled most wildly for above a week. They suspected, that he was of a condition superior to his outward appearance: but there is an ingenuity in madness, that is very delusive: and on this account they were not confident of any inferences regarding him, which they could draw.

He had lucid intervals: but the reflection on his past misfortunes; and the terrific prospect of the future, soon caused a relapse into a melancholy derangement. He imagined that he had committed some great crime, which it was his intense care to conceal from those that surrounded him. But he thought that every one shunned, or hated him; and he supposed that every neglect, every

grave look , afforded evidence that he had been discovered.

Under a load of fancied guilt, he seemed impelled to struggle to recommend himself; and to prove that he was deserving of a better fate. He perpetually talked as if he was pleading at the bar of justice; rebutted presumptions; denied inferences; appealed to mercy; came as if stimulated by some incontroulable desire of confession, to the verge of some supposed fact of criminality; and then, by a surprising turn, urged all these admitted steps as the proofs of his innocence.

A day came, when the attendants observed about him a gloom of an extraordinary kind. It was tender and exalted. Sometimes the tears flowed freely: it was then illuminated by a smile of heroic

patience. He was impressed with the conviction, that he had been capitally condemned; and that the following morning he was to suffer on the block.

Rumours had spread abroad: and some curiosity regarding him had already been excited in the town. At this time the insurrection of the Earl of Essex, and his consequent imprisonment, were topics of universal conversation, and interest through the kingdom. A suspicion arose in the place, that Willoughby was no other, than Essex escaped in disguise, whose troubles had turned his brain.

Their persons were not utterly unlike. They had both a deep, animated expression: but Ralph was handsomer; was better grown; had more regular features; and was made with more symmetry. All the higher classes of the inhabitants

of the town flocked to see him ; particularly the females.

This confirmed Ralph in the conception that he was to suffer on the following day. Many attempts were made to hold conversations with him , but he was often moody and impenetrably silent. But Beauty had so much influence over him even in this state that he never failed to answer the young women blessed with this gift , who addressed him. Every word he uttered , confirmed them in the idea that he was Lord Essex. They listened to him ; they gazed upon him ; they mingled their tears with his.

This extraordinary sympathy ; the earnest softness with which eyes were fixed upon him ; operating upon a mind already in a state of enthusiastic fervor , gave Ralph a sort of mournful eloquen-

cé, that seemed like inspiration. Images crowded upon him with a brilliance far beyond what reality could produce. Uncheck'd by the diffidence accompanying reason, he gave unlimited range to his thoughts and his language. His words flowed in tides of pathos or sublimity. His principal bent seemed to be the desire to be remembered in death; to have his grave covered with the flowers of love, and to have it recorded that he died a victim to ingratitude and injustice.

What could be more calculated to confirm the suspicion that this person was Lord Essex?

A sudden thought of escape now entered the moody mind of Willoughby. He imagined himself a close prisoner: and seeing a lady of an engaging countenance, who appeared peculiarly intere-

sted about him , he put a note secretly into her hands beseeching her to assist him at dawn of the next morning in escaping from captivity and death .

The girl, who, in addition to the interest she had already felt, was highly flattered by this confidence, and believed that the sufferer had good reason to suppose that he was to be betrayed to the agents of the Crown; (for she had no doubt that the person was Essex,) willingly entered into this scheme.

With the first streak of light Ralph arose; and stealing out of the Hospital, found his appointed guide at the door. He had need of a guide; for he was weak in bodily health; and his senses were wandering. His guide had had the precaution to bring a female servant with her. They conducted him some miles

on his road: and then found the necessity of taking their leave. The conversation had been wild and unsatisfactory. Nothing had occurred, that removed the suspicions that he was no other than Lord Essex. But the danger of being proved to have been the accomplice of his flight deterred his guide from venturing farther.

Ralph now proceeded on his way: and continued many days trudging the road with such mean accommodation as chance threw upon him. He was little disturbed in his progress, being every where considered as a person innocently crazed. The rapidity and incoherency with which he continued to talk to himself was the principal sign of this malady.

One morning he waked with the

slanting beams of a bright sun full on his eyes. He found himself in a large apartment, bearing the relics of ancient splendor. Round the room hung two or three old portraits painted on pannel. Over the heavy and fantastically-decorated chimney was a large shield of arms. It contained numerous quarterings. In the first, he gazed with eagerness as he beheld the united *fret* and *cross* of *Willoughby!*

This incident set his imagination into a new flame. He fancied that he was restored to the seat of his ancestors; that all the splendor of the Baronial House of Uffington would return; that he should take his seat in the House of Lords; be among the leaders of the English nobility; and by an union of rank and talents enjoy the sphere suited to an exalted ambition.

He rose, and rambled about the House. All was of a similar character. A spacious hall, through which every footstep echoed: long passages: a massive staircase: a vast gallery, with an hundred portraits, many of them dropping from their frames.

He had not been long in the Gallery, when he thought he heard low voices, and the tread of light footsteps. He started; and then listened. All was silent; and his fancy soon wandered to other subjects. Again the whispers arose; and a door clapped; and a grim form darted across the further end of the gallery. Ralph cried out, with wild looks, and in an awful voice, as if he was addressing supernatural Beings: « Who comes to disturb my dominions?

«Be it a Spirit blest; or Goblin damn'd»

let it come forth; and tell its purpose! I am prepared for it: I can deal with Spirits! I can ride in the air; and pierce the clouds; and lead the music of the winds!»

« It is only a maniac! » whispered a trembling voice: leave him to himself; and he will not perceive us! » — « We are not safe! » answered a sterner tongue: « death tells no tales! here is the thing, that will do the job! » — He drew from his pocket a long knife stained with blood. « Put it up, Gil! » cried the first voice: « Put it up, I say! when needs must, let it do its work! here there is no occasion! » —

This came from a set of Gypsies, who were in the custom of housing themselves by night in this deserted mansion. It had been an old seat of a Western branch of the Willoughby fa-

mily, who had now come to decay.

The advice of the peaceable Gypsey was correct. Ralph soon forgot what had passed; quitted the house; and proceeded on his journey.

Another week passed, during which he had advanced far on his way towards the Capital. When he beheld a mighty Castle with its numerous turrets glittering in the Sun at a distance amid a laughing scenery of delightful richness, he recognized objects familiar to the earlier days of his residence in England. But his memory was yet so flighty, that he could not tell where he was; nor on what occasions he had beheld these objects.

He darted forward; and in a few miles found himself at the gate of a venerable mansion, over which the shield

of arms arrested his notice. He gazed upon it; and then a transient ray of distinct recollection came upon him. It vanished again « Those *wheat-sheafs!* Oh, how often have I seen them at old Burleigh's door! — But I have been here too! I am sure, that I have often sat in yonder baywindow; and looked upon these woodlands; and seen the golden sunbeams playing on yon Castle-towers. » —

It was Stoke, near Windsor; a little before this time the residence of the Lord Keeper Hatton, then deceased:— of which Gray, the Poet, speaks in his *Long Story*, as the place, where

The grave Lord Keeper led the brawls:

The Seals and Maces danced before him.

Queen Elizabeth is said to have promoted this lucky Lawyer for the

gracefulness of his person; and his skill in dancing; a singular recommendation for the first judicial seat of the Kingdom.

Sir Christopher Hatton is however said to have filled this great office with ability and integrity. The Court over which he presided, did not then take the range it has since taken. It was a successor, promoted to this office before the end of the Reign, Lord Chancellor Egerton, (afterwards created Lord Ellesmere, and Viscount Brackley,) (*) who laid the foundation of the present system of jurisprudence, which governs that enlightened Court.

Spenser has honoured Sir Christopher

(*) *He died 1617. He was father of the first Earl of Bridgewater.*

Hatton by the first of his *Dedicatory Sonnets*, in these words:

S O N N E T

To the right honourable, Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord High Chancellor of England, etc.

(wise

Those prudent heads, that with their counsels
 Whilom the pillars of th' earth did sustain,
 And taught ambitious Rome to tyrannise,
 And in the neck of all the world to reign,
 Oft from those grave affairs were wont abstain,
 With the sweet lady Muses for to play:
 So Ennius; the elder Africane;
 So Maro oft did Cæsar's cares allay.
 So you, great Lord, that with your counsel sway
 The burden of this kingdom mightily,
 With like delights sometimes may eke delay
 The rugged brow of careful Policy:
 And to these idle rhymes lend little space,
 Which for their title's sake may find more grace,

EDMUND SPENSER

Ralph had several times accompanied Burleigh on visits to Stoke. (*) He enjoyed the lively hospitality of this accomplished Courtier: and relished the days spent here more than almost any others he had passed with Burleigh. Another exalted Lawyer, of a very different character, came afterwards, (if my memory does not mislead me,) to the possession of this place by marriage. I mean the cruel and pedantic Chief Justice, Sir Edward Coke: a man of profound skill in technical Law; but of

(*) *In the cemetery of this parish was buried Gray, the Poet, whose mother spent her last years, and died, at Stoke. It is in the County of Buckingham.*

very revolting talents; and very unamiable, if not base, heart.

Ralph gained admittance into the house. All was now silence; solitude; and melancholy. He yet knew not where he was: but wandered through the rooms, muttering to himself; till a door opened; and at the further end of the apartment there met his eye a whole length portrait of Gersenda Cecil. He started back: he shrieked: he fainted.

He knew no more what became of him, till he again found himself wandering without a guide on a strange road, feverish, exhausted, despondent. Fatigue or decay of strength; or want, seemed suddenly to withdraw some of the clouds from his intellect. He had spent his last farthing; he was hungry; and thirsty, and houseless.

He sat upon a bank; his heart gave way to sorrow; and torrents of tears flowed down his cheeks. In this state a horseman, well mounted, and of a martial appearance, passing by him, seemed caught by his striking distress. He stopped; gazed; then went on a few paces; then returned.

« What ails you, my friend? » said he to Ralph. — Ralph found it difficult to articulate an answer. « I cannot tell » answered he: « I know not where I am; nor whence I came! » — « You seem in distress! » continued the stranger. « I am indeed! » replied he. — « But how happens it? You seem to have belonged to a better condition of life! » — « I cannot tell: I cannot tell! » he paused; and beat his forehead: « oh,

I recollect, that I have been shipwrecked! » —

« Surely » exclaimed the cavalier, « I have seen you before! What is your name? » —

« Oh, I know not; I know not! I believe, that I have no name. What is in a name? A name would do me no good! » And then he sighed deeply. — « Ah; it *has* done me *no* good! » —

The stranger continued to fix his eyes intently upon him. At last he cried: « Were it not for the condition, in which I see you, I should say that your name was *Willoughby*! »

Ralph started. « Willoughby! » he repeated almost with a shriek: « it is some time since I have heard the sound! — it is a most unhappy one! but I be-

gin to think myself, that that is the name! »

The stranger now perceived, that his memory was deranged: and he had no farther doubts that the person was Ralph Willoughby, with whom he had been well acquainted two or three years before.

The stranger was Sir John Norris, a celebrated Commander of this Reign, whose seat in Berkshire was near the spot, where he now found Ralph. He desired Ralph to take shelter in his house, which was not a quarter of a mile distant; and sent two of his servants to conduct him thither.

Gentle attentions; quiet; regimen, soon brought Ralph to his perfect senses; and he soon recognized in Sir John Norris an old, kind, and generous friend. He told him the history of his late

misfortunes; and interested him deeply in his chequered and unfortunate lot!

Sir Iohn Norris is one of those lucky characters, who have been immortalized by Spenser.

Spenser's roll of Dedications may be regarded as the truest mark of distinction and eminence in that very distinguished age. It is true, that there are many of rank and merit, whom he has omitted. But not one has he eulogized, who did not at that time make a very striking figure.



SONNET

*To the right noble Lord, and most
valiant Captain, Sir John Norris,
Knight, Lord President of Munster.*

Who ever gave more honourable prize
To the sweet Muse, than did the martial crew,
That their brave deeds she might immortalize
In her shrill trump; and sound their praises due?
Who then ought more to favour her, than you,
Most noble Lord, the honour of this age,
And precedent of all, that arms ensue?
Whose warlike prowess, and manly courage,
Tempered with reason, and advisement sage,
Hath fill'd sad Belgic with victorious spoil;
In France and Ireland left a famous gage;
And lately shaken the Lusitanian soil. (fame,
Sith then each-where thou hast dispread thy
Love him, that hath eternized your name. (1)

EDMUND SPENSER.

(1) *The tone and expression and rhythm of this
Sonnet has been strikingly imitated in one or
two of the Sonnets of Milton.*

There was nothing, which had more effect in restoring the soundness of Ralph's mind, and the chearfulness of his spirits, than the conversation which he found at the tables of those public characters, who could command a large establishment. Ralph excelled in conversation with men, whose minds were filled with important concerns. His faculties were invigorated by collision; and many lights thus broke upon him, that he would otherwise have missed. He had on these occasions a rapidity of language, that his pen could not have followed: and in composition the necessity of this mechanical labour would have lost many of his most brilliant effusions.

Sir John Norris, who had been more engaged in an active Profession, where the fatigues of the body leave less time

for intellectual cultivation, listened to the vigour and velocity of his thoughts, and the extent and readiness of his knowledge, with surprize and delight.

Ralph was enabled, without betraying any secrets, to give him a great deal of political information, at once new and very useful to him.

Nor did many of the visitors at Sir John Norris's table listen with less interest to Ralph. He relieved the moralizing gravity of *Samuel Daniel*. (1) and the minute prolixity of *Michael Drayton*(2)

(1) *Samuel Daniel was a Moral, and Historical Poet.*

(2) *The most celebrated Poems of Michael Drayton are his long Topographical Poem; the Poly--Olbion; and his little spritely piece the Nymphidia.*

both of whom were at present visitors of this seat; and who, on the death of Spenser, succeeded, however unworthily, to some slight portion of his fame. The two pastoral poets, *Nicolas Breton*, (3) and Dr. *Thomas Lodge*, (4) were also here; and paid great deference to the genius of Ralph.

But one man of high rank was also here; who had been one of Spenser's best patrons in Ireland; where patronage was of the first importance to him. I mean the Earl of Ormond.

(3) *Some of Breton's short Lyrics are exquisite gems.*

(4) *A selection of Lodge's pieces, which were very rare, has been lately given to the public by Mr. Singer.*

SONNET

*To the right honourable, the Earl
of Ormond and Ossory.*

Receive, most noble Lord, a simple taste
 Of the wild fruit, which salvage soil hath bred:
 Which, being through long wars left almost
 waste,
 With brutish barbarism is overspread;
 And in so fair a land, as may be read,
 Not one Parnassus, nor one Helicon,
 Left for sweet Muses to be harboured,
 But where thyself hast thy brave mansion!
 There indeed dwell fair Graces, many one;
 And gentle Nymphs, delights of learned wits;
 And in thy person, without paragon,
 All goodly bounty, and true honour sits.
 Such therefore, as that wasted soil doth yield,
 Recieve, dear Lord, in worth the fruit of barren
 field.

EDMUND SPENSER

I know not in what estimation the Ormonds hold this Sonnet . It is one of Spenser's best; and one of the most gratifying . They ought to consider it as one of the great glories of their illustrious and most ancient House , which has continued for so many centuries in Ireland, and in England among the highest ranks of nobility ; and which shines with such splendor in the vivid colours of Lord Clarendon's pen .

Ralph accompanied Lord Ormond to London, where he again was thrown into the society of Raleigh . For Lord Ormond and Raleigh had had much business together in Ireland ; and still kept up their connection .

Raleigh chided Ralph ; but chided him gently ; for he was still resolved to win his confidence . Ralph's very reluc-

tance to yield his understanding to him made the other yet more eager to vanquish it,

Lord Ormond smiled, when he saw the unexpected predominance, which Ralph held over this great and domineering genius. He observed, that it was not done by force, assumption, or insolence; that it was done without effort; or design; or even consciousness: that it arose from the force and naivetè of a brilliant mind, indulgent to others; yet firm in its own convictions! —

But whatever courtesy and kindness Raleigh threw on Ralph at this time, much of its effect was lost upon him by his grief for the fate of Essex. The trial was over; and this unhappy Nobleman was condemned to death. There were those, who yet believed that mercy

would be extended to him. The Queen's partiality to him was notorious. Her sorrow and pity for him betrayed themselves in the deepest melancholy.

It was said, that, contrary to the most marked characteristic of her mind and temper, she was wavering. Much now depended on the advice of those about her. The Party in Power were reported to be unfavourable to the fallen Favorite. But there were factions among them; and the Court was full of intrigue and treachery.

When Raleigh intimated opinions leaning to the policy and necessity of implacable punishment, Ralph looked so shocked, mingled with something of indignant anger, that the other perceiving it, became more reserved on the subject.

But Ralph was even horrified; and never afterwards had the same opinion of Raleigh.

Essex was now brought to the block. The Nation was bathed in tears; and followed the persecutors of this amiable and accomplished, yed not innocent, Pcer, with curses.

I know not how such a positive act of rebellion, as that of the Earl of Essex could have been forgiven. The Government, that could be lenient to such acts, could never stand. The fault was not in the punishment; but in the irritations, that gave cause to the offence. The cunning, and rascally, cold-blooded intriguers of the day, no doubt, took advantage of the irritability of Essex's imprudent temper to inflame him to acts of mad and ruinous resentment.

The Queen, when the dreadful act of justice was executed, sunk into irrecoverable despair. Her attachment to the Sufferer has excited surprize, and ridicule, and a thousand extravagant surmises. At the Queen's age, and with such a disparity of years, it is quite impossible it could have been a passion as absurd as love would have been under such circumstances. I know that there are stories of her turn for gallantry in her younger days: and I remember the tale about Lord Thomas Seymour, (the Admiral,) at Ashridge (1) of which the

(1) *Since the seat of the Earls and Dukes of Bridgewater: lately rebuilt by the present Earl. It is in Hertfordshire; near Hemel-Hemsted or rather in Bucks.*

gossipers are so fond. But I also remember what was the conduct of this illustrious Sovereign through a long and dangerous reign. I remember that she shewed that she had no private passions, which were the mistresses of her actions. Penetration; decision; grandeur, were the traits of her mind, and disposition. She was stern; but sternness was the quality, that made her ride triumphant through the political Ocean of those days, agitated by a thousand conflicting winds.

Ductility, doubt, want of self confidence, would have hurled her from the throne in a few months. The vast strength, and perpetual activity of the Catholics; the aid they received from almost every Foreign Power; the intrigues of the Queen of Scotland, and her numerous adherents, never left a moment,

that did not require talent, firmness, exertion, and magnanimity.

By the male line She was of a new race; of a name, that did not inspire awe among the old Nobility. Two of the great Houses of the Peerage were as nearly descended from *The Plantagenets* as herself; through the family of *Brandon*, who had married Mary, youngest sister of king Hen. VIII. the *Stanleys* and the *Greys*, who had carried their blood in marriage to the *Seymours*. (1) These pretensions came in conflict with those

(1) *The present Marchioness of Buckingham, only child of the last Duke of Chandos, is the heir and representative of this line of Greys and Seymours.*

of the throne of Scotland, descended from Margaret, *Eldest* sister of King Hen. VIII.

Though Queen Elizabeth, as daughter of the *Brother*, may seem to modern readers to have unquestioned priority to these sisters, yet Henry's divorces, and his Will, as well as that of his son King Edw. VI. raised many questions in those days.

The young, accomplished, poetical, and amiable, Ferdinando Stanley, Earl of Derby, is supposed to have fallen a victim to poison, because he would not lend himself to the schemes of some of these intriguers.

The unhappy destiny of the Queen of Scots must always draw deep commiseration from every feeling bosom. But it seems clear, that the throne of Elizabeth was not safe, while Mary lived.

The conduct of the Duke of Norfolk;(1) and his engagements with Mary, are a proof of this.

I do not blame Queen Mary. Her intrigues were perhaps the natural consequence of her situation. The most doubtful part of her rival's behaviour was the reception of her into England under promises of protection, followed by making her a prisoner. An act so revolting to faith must be supposed to

(1) *Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, (son of Hen. Earl of Surry, the Poet,) suffered on the block for this conspiracy. The Dukedom of Norfolk was not restored till the Restoration of K. Charles II. The family, in the interval, bore the title of Earls of Arundel.*

have arisen from State Secrets, which History has not yet revealed.

If Elizabeth possessed by nature an heart not made of melting materials, the course of trials to which it was exposed through a long and perilous life, would in the ordinary course augment its harshness. The direction of the supreme authority is too often but a choice of evils from day to day. The enjoyments that still press upon the senses; pomp; splendor; diversity; new cares; rest after fatigue; all efface momentary pain; revive animation; and freshen hope. But as old age comes on, these resources against difficulty and affliction fail. Then we see crimes, and cruelties, and harshnesses, in all their horrors.

The unhappy Queen now lost the elasticity of her great spirit. She spent

the day and the night in tears and groans. She reproached those about her. There is a story of Lady Nottingham, the wife of the Lord Admiral (Howard, which as I relate from memory, I may tell imperfectly. It is said that the Queen in a moment of favour had given Essex a ring; and told him, if ever he was in disgrace, to produce to her that ring as the pledge of forgiveness. No ring had now been produced. After his death, Lady Nottingham confessed to the Queen that she had been employed as the messenger of this precious pledge; and implored forgiveness for having stopped it in its way. The Queen is reported to have said in an agony of grief at this treachery: « *God may forgive you: — I never will!*

Intrigues with the King of Scots now thickened in every quarter. The expect-

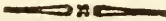
ing Monarch, who prided himself upon his policy and wisdom, entertained separately the correspondence of every Faction; and thought himself the master-spring, who could move them all at his will. But while he thought himself the master of all, he was the dupe of all.

Ralph learned much of what was passing in the Palace of the dying Queen from his friend Sir Robert Carey, a younger son of the Lord Hunsdon, who afterwards the moment the last breath escaped from the Queen's lips stole secretly, and in defiance of orders, from the closed gates of the Court, took horse, and rode without rest to Scotland to be the first communicator of the tidings to the anxious Heir. He has given a curious account of this himself in his own *Life* under the name of *Memoirs of the Earl*

of *Monmouth*, to which title he was afterwards raised .

He was of the Queen's blood by her mother , Anna Boleyn : and by her, his family, which were of ancient gentry in Devonshire , were raised to the Peerage .

Spenser has thus commemorated his Father .



SONNET

*To the right honourable, the Lord of
Hunsdon, High Chamberlain to her
Majesty.*

Renowned Lord, that for your worthiness
And noble deeds have your reserved place
High in the favour of that Emperess,
The world's sole glory, and her sex's grace;
Here eke of right have you a worthy place,
Both for your nearness to that Fairy Queen,
And for your own high merit in like case;
Of which apparent proof was to be seen,
When that tumultuous rage, and fearful din
Of Northern Rebels ye did pacify;
And their disloyal power defaced clean,
The record of enduring memory.
Live, Lord, for ever in this lasting verse,
That all posterity thy honour may rehearse.

EDMUND SPENSER

The poet has also celebrated a Lady of a name, which has been frequently confounded; with this; but which, though of the same County, and of a race at least equally ancient, is totally different in its origin, and arms. I mean the name of *Carew*: though generally pronounced the same as *Carey*.

I cannot at present from memory exactly particularize the Lady, to whom this Sonnet is addressed: nor do I remember, whether Mr. Todd in his late Edition of Spenser has particularized her. I cannot believe her to be the Lady of genius, who was a dramatic writer, and whose name, I think, was *Carey*. There is no allusion in Spenser's Sonnet to this Lady's literary talents.

Another branch of the Careys were created by K. James I. *Viscounts Falkland*, of Scotland: and are memorable

for having produced that beautiful character, whose portrait Lord Clarendon has laboured with so much fondness.

S O N N E T

*To the most virtuous and most beautiful
Lady, the Lady Carew.*

Ne may I, without blot of endless blame,
 You, fairest Lady, leave out of this place,
 But with remembrance of your gracious name,
 Wherewith that courtly girland most ye grace,
 And deck the world, adorn these verses base:
 Not that these few lines can in them comprise
 Those glorious ornaments of heavenly grace,
 Wherewith ye triumph over feeble eyes,
 And in subdued hearts do tyrannize:
 For thereunto doth need a golden quill,
 And silver leaves them rightly to devise:
 But to make humble present of good will;
 Which, when as timely means it purchase may,
 In ample wise itself will forth display.

EDMUND SPENSER.

From Sir Robert Carey's *Memoirs* a lively picture may be drawn of these times. The Queen was thrifty; and kept the Court poor. Its dependents lived almost entirely upon expectation. They were mistaken, if they hoped a golden harvest from the new Monarch: that was reserved for the favourites of his own nation.

From the moment that Essex was removed by the stroke of the axe, Sir Robert Cecil obtained the primary and uncounteracted influence over the Scotch King. He made some efforts to draw back Ralph Willoughby into his confidence: but he was jealous of Raleigh's intimacy with him: and his cautious manner, now grown doubly cautious, and his increased care, (for Burleigh had now been some time dead, and the weight of public

affairs lay on the shoulders of his son,) made him far more repugnant to the sympathy of Ralph, than he used to be.

Sir Robert had often found in Ralph a vivacity and eloquence, which were useful supplies of his own defects. Early intimacy made it less unpleasant to unbend with him than with any other. The rays of Ralph's mind often penetrated into those recesses, where Cecil could not see. The latter had thus opened to him prospects, which the nature of his own talents could not have commanded. There were certain sympathies, which he could not anticipate; and certain results of public measures, which he knew not clearly how to speculate upon.

In his conversations with Ralph he had accustomed himself to use a frankness, that his pride and reserve would

not permit him to use with others. He drew Ralph into several meetings. Sometimes their conversation went on well for an hour together: then a word, a look, broke in upon it; and as if by a spell destroyed it. In truth, confidence once broken scarcely ever becomes entirely sound again.

Cecil would, if he could have ventured to be explicit, have made an effort to detach him entirely from Raleigh. But he dared not hazard even to Ralph the positive declaration that his professed friendship to Raleigh was not sincere. He was equally desirous to sift Ralph with regard to Raleigh's opinions and designs. But Ralph had accidentally been thrown into the confidence of such opposite parties, that, as his sense of honour was in the highest degree refined and active, his

jealousy of a breach of faith was constantly on the alert; and as quick as lightning. Cecil therefore found that all his management availed nothing in effectuating either of the purposes, in which he was so desirous of succeeding.

Ralph now behaved with more delicacy and principle, than worldly wisdom. He might easily have been restored to Cecil's favour. If he would but have given up Raleigh, whom Cecil little suspected how far he was from approving or loving, he might have possessed as much of the favour of the other, as that intriguing Statesman could give to any one.

Cecil's conversation was dark; and, whether designedly or not, perplexed: on some topics he was quite unintelligible to Ralph. He had an idea of something carrying on by Raleigh, of which Ralph

knew nothing. He enquired anxiously of Ralph, if he was acquainted with the Cavendishes. Ralph told him that he knew them very slightly. The old Countess of Shrewsbury, the last wife of Earl George, to whose care Mary Queen of Scots was committed, had exalted her former husband Sir William Cavendish into vast wealth. One of her daughters had married the Earl of Lennox, the uncle of King James, and was mother of the *Lady Arabella Stuart*. This unfortunate Princess was, among others, made the innocent instrument of some dark intrigues in this plotting age.

The old Countess had been one of the most singular characters of her day. Avaricious, ambitious, busy, intriguing, acute in worldly wisdom, ostentatious, splendid, imperious, she accumulated

incredible wealth; set up three sons upon vast property : and enabled her second son to obtain an Earldom under the title of *Devonshire*; and her third to leave an estate to his son, which with his personal merits , and a Barony inherited from his mother, enabled him to acquire by creation the *Dukedom of Newcastle*.

The Countess married another of her daughters to her son-in law, Gilbert the next Earl of Shrewsbury . This younger Countess was a mixture of folly and craziness: talkative, meddling, and indiscreet.

What mischief Cecil could fear from these characters it is not easy to guess . How poor Lady Arabella could be made use of, for any purposes that would endanger the State, we are at this day in the dark .

Cecil knew that Raleigh was discon-

tented; and that he was as ambitious of Honours, as he was of power. Raleigh, with Cecil, Sir Robert Sydney, and three or four others, had for some time been aspiring to a Peerage. In that reign a Peerage was very sparingly conferred. The Queen, I think, had only given it to St. John of Bletso, Buckhurst, Hunsdon, Compton, and Burleigh; in addition to a Summons to Lord Thomas Howard. The three first were her relations; and all expect Burleigh who won it by laborious office, of prime quality among the ancient gentry of the Nation. Raleigh though his race might be ancient, was certainly by descent not of this quality. It is true that he had pretensions of a much loftier kind: but these pretensions it was the fashion to reward in a different way. The personal history of these days

proves, that there flourished at this time a great number of men, high in talent and virtue, who combined with them honourable descent and large estate. Yet these men never thought of a Peerage.

I do not blame Raleigh for this: I rather admire his unfettered spirit the more. His end was right, if he confined himself to legitimate means. But his desire was perhaps too intense, duly to weigh obstacles. He had prejudices, yet immoveable as rocks, to contend with. Direct force, however great, could make no impression upon them. He resorted on this account to sapping and mining.

He saw, as if he was the master of its springs, the character of the expectant Monarch. He beheld all its subtleties; and all its weaknesses. He looked to the

day, when he should be able to move its machinery as a puppet.

Cecil was fully aware of this: he never slept upon Raleigh's motions: he knew almost every movement; and he suspected much more than he knew; and sometimes imagined, what had not the slightest foundation. It was his present conviction that Raleigh was employing Ralph Willoughby to carry on a secret correspondence with Lady Arabella Stuart.

This he had partly inferred from a late conversation with Lord Cobham. The manner, in which this last silly Nobleman was in the habit of talking; his rambling, incoherent, contradictory, gossiping tongue; asserting and retracting; hinting, and denying, made it difficult for any one to come with clear ideas out of the labyrinth of his words. Ce-

cil's cunning here misled him: he refined too much; and supposed design in what was wild inanity.

It has excited surprize, that Raleigh could connect himself with such a man as Lord Cobham. Raleigh may have had better reason than has been supposed. His first reason perhaps was the other's rank; and the influence he at that time possessed with the Queen. But with all this folly, often real, sometimes affected, Cobham had occasional flashes of bright ability. He was an intriguer; without restraint of conscience; and ready for whatever his desires led him to.

This eccentric combination of qualities was useful on many occasions to Raleigh. Whenever he wished any thing unsaid, all the blame of the former assertion was thrown on Cobham's unsteady

tongue . His seeming openness often covered the deepest designs; and led those, who thought themselves wise into dangerous or absurd errors, when they believed themselves in possession of directing secrets .

Lady Arabella Stuart had seen little of the world . She had been principally a recluse; nursing solitary accomplishments amid books, and reflection . Her disposition was kind; and her heart tender . There had been a particular watchfulness, lest she should form an alliance with any of the great English Nobility . The Seymours, who had already allied themselves to royalty through the Greys, were supposed to be desirous of this marriage .

The younger Countess of Shrewsbury had introduced Ralph to this Heiress at one of the Shrewsbury residences . He

pitied the state of restraint, in which she was brought up; and being attracted by a gentle pensive manner, and an intelligent style of conversation, he entered with interest into discussions with her, which she seemed to wish to prolong.

Had Ralph been vain, he would have been elated by the apparent favour she shewed to him. She complained of the miserable domestic feuds, to which she was a witness in the Shrewsbury family. Lady Shrewsbury's brother, Sir Charles Cavendish, and Lord Shrewsbury's brother Edward Talbot, had married sisters; (coheirs of the Lord Ogle;) yet this complicated alliance did not add to the harmony of Lord Shrewsbury with his brother, and heir presumptive, Mr. Talbot. Their dissentions were tremendous. The Cavendishes were looking to a Peerage,

through Arabella's influence, when James should ascend the throne.

Ralph, won by her frankness, communicated to her much of the character of the Court, and its chief actors, with which she was before unacquainted. She trembled at the thorns and precipices amid which she had lived; and among which she was yet condemned still more to live. There was a light and happiness in Ralph's manner, which conveyed to her with the utmost distinctness and vivacity the portraits of those, of whom he had occasion to speak.

She would have had his opinion of Cecil: but on this Ralph was reserved. He had the clearest view of Cecil's character himself; but a friendship recollected with regret, and not yet abandoned, made him consider it a breach of faith

to open his real mind on the subject. He was doubly cautious, because he knew that Cecil was not very well inclined to the Lady Arabella.

The Capital again received Ralph in its dark air; and annoyed him with its dark political intrigues. A gloom overspread the Palace, and the City. Courtiers were hurrying in every quarter, with anxious and haggard looks; suspicious of each other; the disappointed expectants alone betrayed new hopes; and exhibited brightened countenances.

They, whose hopes were the most lively were the party, who had been disappointed of a Peerage in the Queen's last years, when they solicited it with repeated urgency: such at least of them, as were not in possession of those high offices of the State, which they had a

natural care to retain ; and of which the demise of the Crown might deprive them .

Ralph himself was among those whom gleams of hope sometimes visited . He had found the Queen relentless to his family : he admired her talents for Sovereignty ; but the bitterness of individual suffering dimmed his views of her splendor ; and brought perpetually before his reflection the unamiableness of her defects . .

Yet, though he was willing to foster visions of interrupted hope , he always remembered the feeble character of her expectant successor . He was surprized at Raleigh's confidence . His deference to the experience of this vigorous-minded man made him doubt his own observations : but yet he could not utterly sur-

render thoughts which were perpetually returning upon him.

He had been indeed a little behind a curtain, within which Raleigh had not been admitted. He had drawn from Cecil's looks and tones, what Cecil would willingly have concealed; and had little suspicion that he had betrayed to him. But the searching power of genius pierces veils; and makes light out of darkness.

There was a calm certainty of future arrangements in all Cecil's speculations, vainly disguised, which made Ralph see, that He and the future Monarch of the English throne perfectly understood each other. If so, he said to himself, « Raleigh's fate is decided: Cecil will never bear such a brother near the throne » as Raleigh! —

Had Ralph in one moment of ungenerous openness even given a hint of the defects he saw in Raleigh, he had secured the favour of Cecil; he had obtained a place in his heart, which would have done every thing but place him on an equality with himself. He half saw this: but such was his scorn of favour won by that which seemed to verge on perfidy, that he betrayed a warmth apparently uncalled for, whenever Cecil led to these topics.

Cecil deliberated long on these symptoms in the manner of Ralph. He had nothing within him, which taught him the emotions of generous indignation. The suspicion was confirmed in him, that he was privy to some political secrets of Raleigh, too guilty to be betrayed.

He had had full intelligence of his long conversations with the Lady Arabella: but the subjects of those conversations were the fruits of his imagination, not of accurate knowledge. And of what was Cecil's imagination composed? Not of matters of domestic life: not of the visions of poets; or the beautiful forms of the Creation: not of the nice shades in the conflicting characters of moral existence! — but of intrigues, and plots, and treasons! of schemes for power: of plans to supplant: of the robe of Office; and the day of ruin! —

It could not enter his thought, that a woman of Lady Arabella's birth could entertain any plans but of political exaltation. She prayed but for love; content; and safety! She envied the peasant girl, who breathed the free air in the

fields and woods; the mistress of her own actions; and her own heart!—Ralph read poetry to her: her fancy listened; and her soul glowed; till she was almost spiritualized!

But how could Cecil comprehend this? When did he breathe the air of the country, but on stone terraces, and clipped funereal ever-green alleys; and strait formal gravel walks? What reading did he enjoy but a Secret State-paper? And then for content! where did he ever taste it, but in the exclusive possession of place, power, and emolument?

Ralph mentioned to him the character of Lady Arabella's mind, and disposition. Cecil smiled incredulously. Ralph persisted. Cecil thought it was an attempt to mislead him; and grew more suspicious. He said to him one day: « You

have talents for business, Willoughby! I cannot conceive, how you can throw them away on the empty pursuits, on which you waste so much time! When a person can find nothing better to do, he may amuse himself by describing the charms and beauties of rural peace, and exercise his ingenuity in praising the primrose, and the violet. But *you* have been initiated in the mysteries of public business; *you* have shewn yourself fit for the management of it: this is a strange return to childishness, that I cannot reconcile to the energy, and manliness of character, which I have always observed in you! — As to the great Lady, with whose instruction you have charged yourself, I know women too well to be deceived into the supposition that they can be sincere in the love of privacy and solitude! It may

answer your purpose, Ralph, to talk so to her: — it may be a mode of winding yourself into her heart! It is, my friend, the secret way you take to arrive at a *Palace*! It is the end only, that consecrates the road! There is nothing of pleasure in the path itself! — » Ralph reddened with anger; and then smothered it in a smile of involuntary contempt.

« Ah! Ralph! » exclaimed Cecil with half-suppressed bitterness, mingled with triumph at a supposed discovery; « ah, Ralph! Nature, I see, will out. These poetical fancies then are but flowers to cover your ambition! Will they cover the snake's head, however closely it rolls itself in the grass? »

Ralph was so utterly astonished by this harangue, that he lost his usual presence of mind; and sat silent. This

unlucky silence still added to Cecil's suspicions.

The Queen grew worse. Her hour came; and Death released her from the cares of a Crown grown too heavy for her strength. All flocked towards Scotland, to pay their adorations to the rising Sun. The crowds, that attended the new Monarch to the English Capital, were like a moving population of Nobles and Gentry and Placemen. Queen Elizabeth had been very sparing even of the honour of Knighthood. James lavished it, even on the most obscure aspirants.

Ralph Willoughby could not so far neglect his fortunes as to omit attending this cavalcade. The King sought out men of genius and literature. He had just conferred the honour on SIR

JOHN DAVIS (1), *the celebrated Poet and Lawyer*: he almost immediately afterwards called for Ralph Willoughby; and *Knighted* him, almost before he guessed what the Sovereign was about to do.

Sir Ralph felt little gratification from this honour, which had been already laid on so many obscure and imbecile heads. But he was flattered by the conversation, which James chose to hold with him. The Monarch knew his literary propensities; and praised his talents and acquirements.

Sir Ralph thought that Cecil might have taken the pains to have introduced

(1) *Author of the celebrated metaphysical poem, Nosce Teipsum.*

him : but Cecil was that morning absent from the Court . Indeed Cecil had much to do : for the new Monarch committed the whole weight of public affairs to him , as Willoughby had predicted would be the case .

The whole system was now changed . The King was as profuse in every thing , as the Queen had been sparing . Cecil , the Lord Chancellor Egerton ; Sir Robert Sydney ; Sir Edward Wotton , (elder brother of Sir Henry ;) Sir Francis Knowlys ; Sir William Cavendish ; Arundel of Wardour ; and others , were raised to the Peerage .

Raleigh was omitted in this list ; Raleigh , who had aspired to this honour , in the late thrifty and severe reign , when some of the others had not presumed so high .

Raleigh was indignant . He thought he perceived King James's countenance grow every day more clouded towards him . He consulted with Cobham, Northumberland, and Grey of Wilton , who all thought that they perceived the same .

Raleigh now expressed to Sir Ralph Willoughby his suspicions of the new Lord Cecil . The other was impenetrably silent ; but this silence did not lessen the fears , which had thus been taken up . At length Raleigh asked Willoughby in direct terms his opinion of Cecil's friendship to him . Willoughby could no longer evade . He answered :
« Judging from public appearances only, I cannot suppose him to be your friend! »

Raleigh started ; struck his forehead ; and appeared in an agony . He exclaim-

ed, as if unable to restrain the secret movement of his heart : « for what have I destroyed my peace of mind ! To destroy my protector : my defence ! to rid my oppressor of the only obstacle to his cruel despotism ! Down, proud heart ! afflict thyself ! thou deservest it ! » —

His face was convulsed : he paused : and then a big tear or two rolled down his hard, war-worn face ; and he was calmer. Never before had Willoughby seen the great soul of this magnanimous man subdued .

Willoughby was overcome by this unexpected sight . Expressions of anger and resentment would not have touched him . He told Raleigh to call up those gigantic talents, which belonged to him . He said : « Stoop not to circumstances : rely not on favour, and management :

man's favour cannot be commanded: envy and interest interrupt it: when most we want it, it always most flies us! » —

« But » said Raleigh with a softened sigh, and humility which Willoughby had never before witnessed; « can we do without favour and management? I would do without it, if I could! You know my proud heart. I fear-you know it too well! »

« It must not be crushed! It must be passed and overlooked! » cried Willoughby. — Raleigh turned pale.

« *Crushed* » repeated he « *Crushed!* why, I have courted this ungrateful man! not attempted to crush him! » To crush, is always wrong; and often impossible! » answered Ralph: « but neither is courting the way to succeed! « By Heaven » exclaimed Raleigh, « you have a noble spirit!

You burst with a new light upon me! «—
 And then he paused: and trembled—
 « Alas, I fear it is too late! » —

« But why depend on Cecil? » continued Ralph: « his talents are not equal to yours! » « I have depended on him too much, » said Raleigh with a groan; « his mind is as crooked, as his body. » —

« Depend not on him then! win by your sword! command by your genius! bend circumstances to your will! crouch not beneath them! leave courts and intrigues to themselves; and believe that all they can give is not worth a quarter of the debasing price that it costs!

Raleigh shuddered. « Accursed, most accursed chains! » cried he in an agony: « Would that I was like thee, Willoughby! » —

Ralph was glad to terminate this painful conversation. It increased a suspicion he had long entertained, that Raleigh had in some way put himself imprudently at the mercy of Cecil. He was astonished, that with Raleigh's insight into human nature, he had not better calculated upon Cecil's character.

Raleigh had not a very kind opinion of the human heart. It must have been among strong and obvious improbabilities even in the opinion of the most benevolent estimators of human morals, that Cecil could ever voluntarily admit Raleigh into a near participation of power. Minor talents are always jealous, monopolizing, intriguing, covert, perfidious; and safe only under the weapons of artifice.

Willoughby did not yet think his own fortune at Court desperate. He gave occasional attendance there; and sometimes received smiles from the Monarch. The Earl of Southampton, who had been released from the imprisonment to which he had been condemned in the late reign for the share he had in Essex's Insurrection, remembering the partiality entertained for him by his late lamented friend, was more especially anxious to bring him under the King's favourable notice.

Cecil's behaviour to him was so capricious, that he was unwilling to expose himself to its uncertainties. Sometimes this Statesman, now growing greater every day, seemed ready even to solicit a return of Sir Ralph's familiarity and confidence: but then,

when he had been seen a day in the company of Southampton or Raleigh, he grew cold, or insolent, and fierce, and taunting. Sir Ralph was not of a temper to bear these provoking changes. He returned fierceness for fierceness ; and taunt for taunt. Lord Cecil, surprized to find the other neither dazzled by his new splendor, nor daunted by his new power, became alternately resentful, and overawed.

At one time he recommended to the Monarch to promote this old friend: at another, he undid his own recommendation by sly hints, which he knew to be best calculated to poison the pusillanimous Sovereign's morbid mind.

His sister Gersenda Cecil had been long married to the son of a rich City Knight, whom she despised, and hated.

An endeavour was made to reconcile her to her husband, by a promise to raise him, base as his birth was, to the Peerage, now become prostituted by one or two mercantile advancements of a similar sort. But Gersenda had not forgot her old predilection; and she was anxious once more to admit Sir Ralph Willoughby to her favour.

He turned with horror from these flagitious advances. It was only from the belief, long since vanished, of an unsophisticated, and honourable affection, that he could ever find any charms in her. She came full smiling to the Court, decked in her pearls and diamonds: she looked around her for admiration: she cast a triumphant glance on Sir Ralph Willoughby! He started: « Where is it » he said to himself,

« that I could have seen her as I now see her? » The impression of the picture at Stoke was before him: but he was not aware of the circumstance. His journey from Cornwall was a blank in his mind.

With eyes and ears extraordinarily acute, he looked around him; and was astounded at the utter change, which had taken place in the whole fashion of the Court. Hitherto there had been a repulsive sort of ceremony: men could not break certain barriers: there were etiquettes, which now and then suppressed merit; and chilled pleasure: but how much oftner did they check presumption; and keep in awe vice! —

The new Monarch's Court was a Court of licentiousness and anarchy: not because he was wanting in the

most exaggerated ideas of the kingly power: but because he thought *that* power omnipotent, and capable of conferring greatness on insignificance; and strength on inanity.

In the former reign, that part of the minor gentry, whom arrogance and conceited self-importance would have urged, if they had dared, to obtrude into higher spheres, were kept in such check, that they seldom overleapt, or attempted to overleap, the barrier. Now and then, vast wealth, aided by other fortunate circumstances, did overleap it: but it was a phenomenon. The new Monarch had no *tact* on this subject: he did not know the old from the new families. The moment that Wealth was admitted to be the criterion, some of the meanest rose over many of the most illustrious Houses.

In a Commercial Country, above all others; the predominance of mere Wealth must be kept in check. The mean qualities, by which it may always be obtained; not to speak of the turpitude, by which it too generally is obtained; render this necessary.

Every thing now proceeded in a rapid course of deterioration. Fine dress, handsome persons, buffoonery: splendor to the eye; coarseness to the understanding; and coarseness in the manners; trifling; dissolute amusements; uncalculated expence! — Cecil was content to let the Court go its own way, if it but gave up to his command the reins of government. Lord Ellesmere presided with unshaken integrity and wisdom over the Law; and corrected its harshnesses by an enlightened spirit

of Equity. Buckhurst, now become Earl of Dorset, had anxious and perilous work to manage the Treasury.

Raleigh, neglected, discontented, and glad to find occasion of censure, indulged in vehement harangues against a system of administration, which outraged with such ignorant blindness those great principles of State and political economy, into which his presaging genius saw so clearly long before others. He was glad to throw the blame on Cecil: but Cecil saw it with sufficient disapprobation; though not in the clear light, in which it was beheld by Raleigh. He had not the power to stop the influx of this tide of stupid wastefulness. His fault was in his reckless ambition: in retaining that power, which he could not conduct according to his own judgement.

Raleigh, Northumberland, Cobham, Grey of Wilton, and others met frequently to complain of grievances, and give vent to their spleen. Sir Ralph Willoughby reasoned with Raleigh; and endeavoured to moderate his vehemence; and to exculpate Lord Cecil from many of the faults, with which his shoulders were unjustly loaded. But Raleigh's threats of vengeance were not to be suppressed.

Lord Cecil was now created Earl of Salisbury. This made Raleigh's rage boil afresh. "Leave the little man to himself, my illustrious friend!" said Willoughby: "it is only by contending with him, that you will be foiled! Overlook him; pass him; leave him behind: go your own great way; and the game is yours!" — Raleigh sigh:

ed; and trembled : he clasped Willoughby's hand : « if I had had, » (he answered,) « such an adviser as you, a few, a very few years ago, I had not known this afflicting trial of my spirit ! » —

« The world is yet all before you ! » Sir Ralph went on in a tone of generous and noble consolation : « never yet was it in the power of one man to suppress the genius of another, but by that other's own fault ! »

« Ah, *fault* ! » replied Raleigh : « had I had but half your sublime simplicity of heart and understanding, I had been saved ! »

This conversation had passed between them, when by themselves. Before others, Raleigh still kept up his dignity : and his appearance of an undaunted mind !

The Earl of Salisbury had not yet entirely abandoned Willoughby. He kept a strict eye upon all his movements: he well knew every interview between him and Raleigh: he even obtained communications of parts of their conversations. Part of the last very memorable advice given by him to Raleigh had been overheard, and repeated to this inquisitive and anxious Minister.

Salisbury deliberated in what manner to treat the subject of this intelligence. He still thought Willoughby too valuable a coadjutor to be lost! He thought the advice tended to urge Raleigh to the adventures of sea-voyages: and to this he had no objection.

Not all his full possession of power could quiet his dread of Raleigh's ascen-

dant talents. Nor did he less dread his undaunted spirit; and his scornful disregard of slight or common obstacles. Deeply versed himself in the obliquities of human nature, always suspicious, and believing that outward appearances were not for a moment to be relied upon; he had not such confidence in the continuance of the Monarch's favour, as to be sure that he was yet safe from Raleigh's direct talents.

He saw with uneasiness, grief, and a mixture of suppressed indignation and scorn, the Monarch's numerous weaknesses, foibles and faults. These would put him at the mercy of Raleigh, if Raleigh could once find a familiar approach to him. But even the King's best qualities, (for he had some endowments of mind) would increase the force of Raleigh's fa-

cility to get a mastery over his spirit.

He now conceived the design of using Willoughby as a counter-balance to Raleigh. He had sufficient penetration and judgement to appreciate the full strength and brilliance of Willoughby's endowments. He had also learned that to him Raleigh himself yielded an unaccountable deference.

The interviews with Willoughby, which he procured in pursuance of this scheme, were not at all satisfactory. Willoughby had lost all relics of confidence in Salisbury: he suspected that it was the other's plan to entrap him into a breach of Raleigh's confidence. This failure confirmed the suspicions, and redoubled the hatred, of both.

Willoughby was now more weary of the new Court, than he had been of the

old . Raleigh would have made him a confidential member of all his discontented cabals : but they were irksome, and even disgusting to him .

He had lately received from abroad a scanty pittance of his poor share of the miserable wreck of his father Lord Uffington's fortunes . With this he resolved to retire to a cottage in the country ; and bury himself in solitude for the remainder of his life . He chose his spot ; and communicated to no one its position .

It was a scattered hamlet of half a dozen houses , about a mile from the village where was placed the parish church . All the inhabitants were woodmen, except one : this last was a shepherd . Sir Ralph hired the whole cottage ; and expended a small sum in adding a few conveniences to those which the humbler ranks of life required .

The first week of escape from the torment of the passions and cares by which he had been lately assailed, was Elisium to him . When the pure air of the country adds novelty to its refreshing powers; when the silence of all around sits with the charm of peace upon the bosom; when the beauty of every form of Nature, opposed to the vapid, factitious, nauseating combinations of man in congregated habitations, bursts upon the delighted senses; when the heart breathes freely again, and the blood runs in kindly currents through the veins; how the soul exults at its liberation! how the mind glows at its recovered existence! how joyful is every thought, except that, which regrets the time that has been lost .

A little garden surrounded his small

dwelling. He began to till it with his own hands. Vegetation was in its first burst: the young leaves shone in the dew of the most brilliant emerald: the first simple flowers of the Spring opened with exquisite perfumes upon the humble beds.

He said to himself: "at how moderate a price; and how free from the counterbalances of vice and temptation, is to be had all of real enjoyment that life can give! It is accursed ambition, that leads us astray: that sin, which must have been the inheritance of Adam's Fall! Air; exercise; light labour; rest; free thoughts; the scenery of this beautiful face of things; the change of seasons; the succession of day and night; the dawn; the meridian; the twilight; all, when undebased by man's passions

and crimes, confer unalloyed enjoyment! There are moments when I look back on the long line of my illustrious ancestors with satisfaction! But when I consider that to this descent I may attribute the impulse by which I have been carried into that career of perilous and sophisticated society, which has been my torment and my ruin, how strongly am I disposed to wish that my birth had been obscure; and that my lot had fallen in the abodes of humble and contented competence!

« If we believe that man is exalted in proportion to the intellectual part of his enjoyment, why do we seek those haunts where it is most fettered and oppressed? Are Courts the places where Fancy expands her wings; and visions of ideal pleasure visit us? Are crowded masses of corrupt and irritated Man, where all

the fury of the greater, and all the turpitude of the petty passions, are in frightful conflict, are these the spots, where the Mind can elevate, or invigorate her exertions? I have been contending with those, whose defects were their sure means of success; whose stupidity was their protection; and whose baseness was their guide! What have I gained? I have lost the time, that would have led to excellence in the path, for which Nature fitted me. I have been employed, at the cost of care, suffering, danger, in a line where I have gained nothing: but have been loaded with insult, disgrace, and bitterness!

« It is past! — the dream is vanished! But alas, it is not as if it had never been! I feel too painfully that it has left its traces behind it! I cannot efface from my memory a thousand galling

looks and words and observations! The glow of that which my imagination creates, is clouded by the obtrusive presence of the sable figures which my experience has encountered! My philanthropy is chilled; my hope is palsied: I say to myself, «these pictures, how beautiful they are! but, alas, how my heart sinks, at the reflection that they are not true!» —

« Why does Providence confer upon us a Being so full of inconsistencies? Why are our visions so beautiful; why is our conduct so imperfect, so sensual, so base? Why do we delight to contemplate the rural peasant so innocent, so simple, so contented, and so happy! and why are we destined to find him so coarse, so sensual, so stupid, and so heartless? »

Willoughby soon became sensible that solitude had its evils. A wounded mind cannot always be safely left to its own reflections. The pain of intensity is sometimes more dangerous than the pain of interruption. He could only find relief in the variety of his mental occupations. He commenced the outline of a long Heroic Poem; he began a set of Moral Essays; and he formed the plan, and made the first attempt, of a Memoir of his Own Time. In the last he resolved to draw sketches of character with a frank but candid hand; yet so much to the life as to preclude their appearance before the public in his own days. He never lived to finish these Memoirs.

Sometimes he found his intellectual tasks occupy too much of his time

and care; and exercise under the open sky, which could alone obtain for him a continuation of enjoyment in his present dwelling, became neglected, or postponed.

Some uneasiness arose at a suspicion that his retreat had been traced. There was brought to him a most mysterious anonymous letter, to which at first he could in no part affix any distinct meaning. The writing was of a disguised hand. Willoughby repeatedly examined it, because he thought the forms of some of the letters were familiar to him. At last he recollected some Manuscript in his possession, which it seemed to resemble. It was a letter of the illustrious, but unhappy, Sir Francis Bacon.

This enlightened lawyer, and wonderful genius, was a first cousin of the Earl

of Salisbury; to whom he yet owed little favour; and nothing of his elevation. He had indeed been a partizan of Essex; against whom, with a grievous reproach to our fallen natures, he pleaded with earnestness at his fatal Trial.

I must not attempt the character of Bacon. It has been the subject of a thousand pens. Willoughby admired his gigantic talents; and lamented with dejection of heart his numerous weaknesses.

He shuddered, when he reflected upon the letter he had now received. Sometimes he imagined it to contain dark advice; and that it warned him against implicating himself in dangerous designs by a Party, that seemed to point at Raleigh, as their chief. Sometimes he suspected it to be a trap to furnish evidence against

him on a future occasion. It was his prevalent opinion, that it was a snare laid for him by Salisbury.

He employed four excruciating hours of a beautiful morning in deliberating on this mysterious subject. When reflection could no longer avail him; when his mind became a chaos of perplexities, he threw the letter in indignation into his drawer; siezed his hat; and walked and ran with an hurried and almost breathless pace, till he was exhausted. He had passed he knew not whither; he was in the depth of a thick and apparently interminable wood, when the song of a melodious human voice sounded from a distance. His heart was cheered; he paced slowly; and recovered his breath.

At length, at a distant point of the long vista before him, a small break let

in the light of the sky. He hastened to it. The opening was on the brow of a hill, which commanded a glimpse of the blue Ocean; and on the cliffs, which overhung it, of a mighty Castle raising its massy towers in the dim air.

He stopped: « O beautiful and majestic scenes of Nature! » he exclaimed: “ Ye are the only balm for the tumults of the heart! Vile intrigues! horrible conspiracies of man, that disfigure you; and let loose the demons of Malice and Fury to lay waste the enchanting charms of this material globe! Blow upon me, ye winds! exalt my ear, ye zephyrs, to listen to the harmony of the spheres! „-“

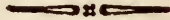
He ran along the brow: descended the valley; and mounting another hill, beheld the blue sea more gloriously: and the white cliffs of rival France glittering dimly in the faint horizon.

He now vowed an eternal farewell to the world: and resolved most earnestly never again to quit the grandeur of nature in her Solitude for the restless and wicked abodes of Man!

It was not till Night closed round him, that he returned to his cottage. He had brought a few books with him. He took up the Poems of a Friend; and his eye was attracted by the following:



SONNET
ON
SOLITUDE



To sit, and listen, while the lulling wind
 Sounds its lugubrious tones along the sky:
 To hear each battlement with mournful cry
 Give back the shrill lament, appals the mind,
Which is not to sublimer thoughts assign'd :
 But he, who fancies he is lifted high,
 A prelude of celestial strains to try,
 Can joy in these soul-moving murmurs find !
A mental Being it does ill beseem
 To shun reflection; and to live in crowds,
 Lest thoughts, like ghosts, should trouble and
Yet are men wont this solitude to deem (affright!
 An evil, which the light of life enshrouds;
 And covers day with sadness, and with night!

It is vain! We may fly to the deepest solitudes: but our Fate pursues us! — We are many of us born to misfortune and misery, for causes inscrutable to our limited faculties! for faults not our own! from destinies, which virtue cannot overcome!

Willoughby passed a most agitated night! Frightful dreams succeeded each other. He waked: he strove to break their train: when he closed his eyes again, new horrors of gigantic form rose in troops upon his fancy. He imagined he was dragged to the scaffold: fiends tied his hand, and held him to the block: the cruel axe fell: his head was severed from his body: it rolled in its gore, when the form of his Father burst upon the stage; and caught it in his mantle. He shrieked so loud, that the peasant, who

waited on him, came into his room. The big drops stood upon his face. He trembled in every limb. He could no longer trust himself to sleep.

He rose: He procured a candle: he took a book; and endeavoured to read. The stillness of Night was now oppressive to his appalled heart. He endeavoured to soothe his mind by a resort to the Muse: and made the rash attempt to charm away his horror by describing it.

Fragment.

To Light.

I,

It was a night

Of Horror. The blest Moon

Refused her influence boon;

And birds and beasts stood motionless with fright.

Black as a pall while Darkness hung

Unmingled with a ray

Of arrowy grey, (flung.

A breath-exhausting weight on Nature's form she

II.

Thou thrice-blest Beam!
 Whether in gold unshorn,
 Or with the dawn of Morn,
 Or silvery from the Moon thy radiance stream;
 Or from the Star, that vapours veil,
 Faint coruscations break
 The gloomy flake;
 I bend th' adoring knee, thy gifts of life to hail!

He now found himself so much exhausted, that he could not continue this sort of mental occupation.

He watched the dawn of light: and when the morning came, found comfort in its protection. While the dews were yet heavy upon the ground, and enveloped the new-sprung vegetation, he went forth to breathe the freshness, and wade through the retiring vapours. He took his way along the principal lane that led to the hamlet. At the

distance of a quarter of a mile, the lane emerged upon a down: the mists yet threw all around him into invisibility: the bell of the sheep was heard almost close to him, when not a glimpse of them was to be seen: every sound travelled through this grey veil as if it was conveyed by it with greater distinctness. The interrupted voices of the early villagers; the tinkle of the harness of the team going to their work; the first scream of the plough; the cheer of the woodmen in the salute of their first meeting; the whirl of the village bucket at its earliest labour; — every rural sound, now came with a sort of musical clearness on Willoughby's ear.

At length he heard the tread of a horse or rather two horses, moving with an activity unlike the sluggish pace of

the cattle of husbandmen. At first he supposed them to be sportsmen. The sounds rapidly approached: in an instant a voice saluted him. It was Sir Walter Raleigh! « So, I have found you out, Willoughby! » said he. « I am come for a day, or two, to partake of your solitude! I should have been with you last night: but I lost my way! I spent three hours, till the dawn, under a lone shed, in the valley, on the other side of yonder hill! » —

Willoughby had never before beheld Raleigh with so much repugnance: He returned his salute so coldly, that he was afraid that Raleigh perceived it. He was sure that this deep man did not come for nothing: that he had some secret object, not unimportant: He said with an affectation of gaiety:

« Really, Sir Walter, I thought that I had found a retreat, which even *you* could not penetrate! » — « Well » answered Raleigh; affecting good humour in return — « the reception must be welcome, in proportion to the difficulty of the task! » —

« And where, » he continued; « is this seductive spot of ease and quiet and content? If it is not near, I must yet lay up my bones under the trunk of the stunted tree that we are approaching: for I assure you, I am very weary with my night's journey! » —

« The fogs are dispersing, » replied Willoughby; and you will soon see the smoke of the hamlet under the brow of yonder wood! » — Raleigh's countenance revived: for he had looked pale and exhausted.

When they reached Willoughby's abode, his visitor, after a slight refreshment, surrendered himself to a profound sleep of several hours. Meantime the mind of Willoughby was perplexed by conjectures. He was irritated, chagrined, and overcome with gloom at this intrusion. It had followed a most feverish, and presageful night. He said to himself: « here, is an end of my dream of rural obscurity and safety! I had better commit myself to the mercy of the tide; and let it carry me where it will! »

Raleigh waked. It was an anxious day: the conversation was guarded on both sides. Raleigh's affected ease; his praises of the quiet around him; his equivocal commendations of Willoughby's taste for solitude; his dark and

intricate and profoundly--laboured arguments, all betrayed that something was behind, different from that which was upon the surface.

Lord Cobham had a brother, engaged in the same politics with himself. Willoughby had always avoided him. Of this man Raleigh now talked with so much earnestness; and so many commendations; that the other suspected he had some purpose in this attempt to alter his opinion of him.

It was impossible for a man of vigorous ability to be long in Raleigh's company without being charmed; even against his will. His views were so grand; his knowlege so extensive and so ready; his decisions so acute and so firm; his language so striking, and so original; and his illustrations so happy,

that he kept the attention chained; and while he gave every faculty its share of employ, allowed the listener no leisure to recover from the repetition of their effects.

There were in the Court at this time certain mysterious movements, that kept Salisbury in the most painful anxiety. The Catholics were grievously disappointed at the System adopted by the new Monarch. His pusillanimity, which had separately given encouragement to every Faction, had raised the hopes of this powerful Body to a fearful height. The plot, which was to have exploded under the conduct of Guy Fawkes, was extensively spread; and many families in the country, of no mean quality, were supposed to be connected with it,

Raleigh seemed anxious to dwell upon the working of these dangerous elements; and sometimes entered into details which Willoughby was little desirous to hear. In the evening, exhausted at last with the tale of a succession of intrigues far beyond even what he had ever hitherto suspected, he said fretfully: « if I could before waver in my resolution of retirement, all I have now heard would irrevocably confirm me!,, —

Raleigh perceived that he had gone too far. But this was not the time to redeem it. Rest was necessary for both; and they retired to their beds.

In the morning Raleigh took advantage of Willoughby's want of an horse; and rode out by himself, under pretence of exploring the country: He

was absent till twilight; and on his return pretended that he had again mistaken his road. There was however so much self-complacence in his manner, that his host was sure something had occurred, which had given him satisfaction. There is a fever in minds accustomed to action beyond the middle age, which cannot be allayed. Rest is death to them; they require violence of motion; or they stop.

No two men of talent well-inclined to each other could have carried on conversations more uneasy and oblique than those, which now took place between the host and his guest for the remainder of this, and the following day. Each would have penetrated into the other's purposes, if he could. Willoughby had not a clue to what

Raleigh was about. In this solitary spot he saw no path for the intrigues of ambition. He believed that Raleigh's *pastoral* taste had ceased with his youth! —

Raleigh enquired with some curiosity about his neighbours. He seemed incredulous when the other assured him, that he knew of none: and smiled, as if with a doubting contempt, when he added that such knowlege would have been no recommendation to his choice.

On all subjects of active life Willoughby expressed his abhorrence in terms so resolute, that the other, as often as he touched on the subject, was necessitated again to abandon it.

On the fourth day Raleigh departed; apparently as little himself satisfied as

he left his host . Willoughby now gave himself up to the most anxious musings . He lamented that he had ever been acquainted with Raleigh . All his resolutions for the plans of his future life , to which he had brought himself peacefully and convincingly , after many temporary doubts and scruples , were disturbed . To continue this retirement without enjoying the good of it , was quite folly . If he could not be secure from intrusions of this sort , he failed in his first object .

Solitude is only good , when it can enable us to forget the world , and its passions . This perpetual irritation ; this constant re-opening of the wound , at the moment it is healed , is of all things the most provoking .

While he reflected upon Raleigh's

undiminished ambition, he wondered that the vanity of the objects, for which he was sacrificing so much, never seemed to occur to him. He thought, as Gray afterwards thought:

« What is Grandeur; what is Power?
 Heavier toil; superior pain!
 What the bright reward we gain?
 The grateful memory of the good. »

Then how can Power bought at the expence of conscience recompence the price?

His musings on the propensities and destinies of human nature were now both intense and painful. If he had wanted other proof that this state of existence is but a part of our Being, he would have derived it from the inequality of our endowments corporeal

and mental, and the inequality of the dispensation of good and evil with reference to the good or evil of our conduct. He might have his frailties: he was aware that dark thoughts and dark passions sometimes crossed his brain, and his heart. But without conceit or arrogance he could not but be conscious, that, taking the whole tenor of his life, even from childhood, he had been mainly directed by the most noble impulses, and most virtuous affections: that his fault, as far the world was concerned, lay in dreams of impossible goodness: that he had a poet's visions in all his hopes; and a poet's fancy in all his thoughts of others: that while others disguised the secret movements of their bosoms by false representations of virtue and refinement which they felt not,

he, to avoid ridicule, concealed the pure and sublime and generous emotions, which overflowed in his heart.

In addition to other arguments in favour of the Solitude he had now embraced, he had had sufficient experience to be convinced, that all the pleasures of an Human Being, endowed with the higher order of talents, lie in speculation. It is the spiritual part of his nature alone, which is capable of satisfactory enjoyment. It is the hope; and the retrospect. The moment of possession is vanity.

« The common air, the sun; the skies: » those prospects of the material world, that delight our senses, in what is their prime joy but in the movements of the mind which they set to play? in the ideal goodness, which we

associate with what we see? in the imaginary creation, which we add to what we behold and feel?

It is the poet then, who does the most for himself; and the most for others. « Shall I » said Willoughby, « desert the office of a Poet, if the gifts of my birth have enabled me to fulfill it? Visions cross me day and night! beautiful and, sublime images flit across my brain! Can I forgive myself for letting them pass for ever unpursued? they reproach me! they beckon to me! they cry, « will you not hear our songs? will you not notice our forms? will you prefer the coarse conversation of mere mortal turpitude? » — They promise to light me to a temple, where Humanity shall put on a ray of glory! where my sight,

cleared of its dim obstructions, shall behold the elevated heart in the beatitude of celestial movements! where its momentary hues of brightness, its transient anticipations of immortality, shall be viewed as in a glass!

« It is an habitual emancipation from worldly desires, which alone can purify us for the heights of this employment: Rapid as the change in the shapes and colours of the clouds; quick as the passage of lightning through the reclosing darkness of night, are those nice shades of moral distinction, or spiritual shapes, with which the attention of the true poet is occupied. They elude the groveling heart, and the thought that is weighed down by too much earthly dross.

« Raleigh has clogged himself with

mortal passions, and desires : and he no longer has the power to be a Poet. He is a man of business : a man of business cannot be a Poet ! »

He wearied himself with these internal discussions. They sometimes fill the mind with interest and pleasure : but they often oppress it. There is — « a tædium of o'erlaboured thought, » which is followed by long hours of languor and debility. There were :oo many minutes even in this state of calm, in which he almost felt tired of existence. Experience had given him but a comfortless view of our sojourn on this globe. Of all the causes of despondence to which we are exposed here, scarcely any, if any, are so painful, as a loss of confidence in the virtue of mankind. Doubt, anxiety, watchful-

ness follow even the charms of ideal visions, and fancied excellences are diminished! and unless we can believe the virtue, which our imagination presents to us, possible, our interest in it is greatly chilled.

He had drawn the outline of his Poem before Raleigh's visit. He would now have resumed it: but his spirits flagged; and he was almost inclined to commit it to the flames.

The name of this poem was *Altheadora*. A nation, being sunk by a bad choice of a Sovereign into corruption, vice, and pusillanimity, at a period coeval with that of the early Britons, the wise men on consultation refer to the Oracles, who foretell that ere long a Female shall be born, who after a childhood of privacy, shall

grow up with all imaginable charms of mind, heart, and person; and shall, if properly applied to, be ready to win and ascend the throne; restore the national manners, and character; and place the realm on the pinnacle of glory.

The whole noble youth of the country, burning with ambition to obtain her favour, are stimulated by their admiration and love to the noblest achievements of prowess and generosity. The vicious Tyrant, whom she has dethroned, is executed amid the scorn, and insults, of a people sensible of their late degradation, and glorying in their new Sovereign.

The plan of it had this advantage over Spenser's Poem, that its Allegories were only occasional. Willoughby had always studied with intense admi-

ration *Sackville's Induction and Legend of the Duke of Buckingham*; and caught more of his sombre manner, than of the easier and more diffused brilliance of the *Fairy Queen*. The colours of his own life broke out very visibly in many of the Fragments of the poem, which he had yet written. As Dissimulation, and low Cunning, and crooked paths of policy, were most abhorrent to the soul of the author, so the expression of these disgusts most constantly broke out in the characters he had hitherto drawn.

He laboured the character of *Altheadora* with the most brilliant colours. She was constantly opposed to the portrait of her predecessor, who was delineated as a pusillanimous monster, subtle, cruel, a dissolute hypocrite,

desirous of guiding all by his own will and caprice: yet at the mercy of a dissembling, bad Minister, more able, more wicked, more cruel than himself!

The prose materials for this poem had already filled a large MS. but they were not digested into any order: and they were strangely mixed with matter, which had arisen from other inquiries, and was intended for the subject of other productions. In truth every thing was confounded, just in the disjointed state, in which it had risen in the writer's mind. Many of the hints for the memoirs of his Own Time were inserted in this commonplace Book. A few of the remarks on his cotemporaries were unquestionably very severe!

Willoughby had one of the kin-

dest hearts: but his speculations on mankind were very bitter! It was, I think, said of the gay Earl of Dorset of Charles the Second's days, by Pope, that he was

The best good man with the worst-natured Muse.

But Lord Dorset was a Satirist. Willoughby did not deal in Satirical composition. He deemed Satire a lower species of poetry, unbecoming a mind of ardent fancy. It was to reverse the prime traits, on which the excellence of poetry ought to depend.

In the course of a week his calm had in some degree returned. He took his long daily rambles: he became acquainted

With every alley green, and bosky bourn:

and as the nearer scenes became familiar, he roved farther; and found his

strength, and power of exercise, increase with his curiosity.

He had got beyond the limits of the farthest stroll he had hitherto taken, when he reached, one morning, a hill that opened a new view of a rich and extensive country upon him. Down in the valley at the distance of two or three miles, he observed a considerable mansion embosomed in trees, that from its beautiful situation attracted his peculiar notice. He had not long kept his eyes upon it, when with his glass he imagined that he saw the figures of persons on horseback issuing from it. An open plain lay on the bed of the valley, more than a mile on the hither side of the mansion. In a little while he discerned these persons advancing at a gallop cross the plain.

He remained upon the spot: the sun was warm; yet the air was refreshing. He soon heard the steps of horses ascending the hill. As they came nearer, he perceived them to be two ladies with their attendants. They reached the spot, where he was seated. The foremost lady stopped her horse; and threw back her veil, « Sir Ralph Willoughby! » she cried: « oh, Sir Ralph Willoughby! — how came you here? » It was Lady Arabella Stuart! Her courteous and winning address; her gentle smiles; her soft voice, delighted Willoughby. He returned her salutation with respectful ardor of civility. They conversed for a quarter of an hour. She made him promise to visit her the next day at the mansion in the Valley, where she had been re-

sident for more than a month with a Branch of the Cavendish family.

Willoughby, while returning home with slow and thoughtful footsteps, ruminated anxiously on this occurrence. He was impatient for the hour, that would again bring him into Arabella's company.

The hour came. He rose early; took his walk in the freshness of the morning; and reached the house in time to find Lady Arabella alone in the garden, before the rest of the family had quitted their chambers. The first enquiry she made was, « if he had seen Sir Walter Raleigh? » He told her; that he had lately received a visit from him. « I have seen him also! » she answered: « but he did not tell me, whence he came! » There was

something mysterious in this; and one of the purposes of Raleigh's visit to him was now apparent.

Lady Arabella told him, that this interview with the great man had surprised her. It was a visit of ceremony; the conversations were general; but yet she thought she perceived an inclination to political topics, to which she gave no encouragement. She said, she had no desire to enter into State or Court cabals: she desired only tranquillity, and a private life. But Raleigh smiled sometimes at some of her expressions; and she was afraid, that he had more than once misunderstood her. « This extraordinary Man, » continued she, « always keeps me in a sort of awe: I cannot be at my ease with him: I always suspect, that * more is

is meant than meets the ear. It is quite different with you, Sir-Ralph. I always am sure of what you intend to express. I can follow your opinions; and comprehend your reasons. You have the art of convincing me: and I part from you, not only pleased with your frankness; but better satisfied with myself! » —

Willoughby could not but be affected by this compliment, uttered with a winning simplicity and condescension. Nor did he think it on the present occasion ill-placed. He suspected, that she had good reason for her incomprehensibility with regard to Raleigh: He was at least equally impressed with the fear that something dark was brooding behind the curtain of this celebrated Politician's mind. He deeply

regretted any attempt to involve this innocent, guileless, and peaceful Princess in the detestable intrigues and restless dangers, of State-affairs. It had always appeared to his sentiments a defect in Raleigh's moral character, not slight, that, when he had objects warmly in view, he had too little consideration for the fate of those, whom he involved in his schemes.

On the present occasion it behoved him, however forcibly suspicions flashed upon his mind, to be circumspect and considerate before he uttered them. The charge was grave: he yet had a friendship for Raleigh, and a preponderant admiration of him, which would not allow him to utter such a conjecture in haste.

It occurred to him to endeavour to

caution Lady Arabella without committing Raleigh. He told her, that men like Raleigh, who had led a life of perpetual motion, liked to know every body, and to be every where: that when they had long been engaged in the secrets of politics, they contracted habits of mystery, which they exhibited on all occasions; sometimes without meaning; and often without being aware of it. « But » he added, « this mysterious manner is sometimes not on that account less dangerous to those, to whom it is practised. There are high situations, where the only safety consists in keeping entirely aloof from those engaged in public life. Interviews are always liable to misconstructions. Walls can hear: — ah, and speak! — and invent too! — The sim-

plest, and most innocent words are capable of two meanings! If Sir Walter Raleigh's habitual manner is enigmatical, how much is the danger aggravated in such a case! » —

Lady Arabella answered: « you confirm the dread, which had seized me! I sat on thorns during all Raleigh's visit. Pure as I was from the most remote thought of any political intrigue, I knew that I was liable to the suspicions of the very servants of the house. Sir Walter Raleigh is a man of so very singular a countenance; his whole person is so striking; and his name is so much the subject of every one's tongue, that I could not doubt that his visit would form matter of conversation for all the household. But what could I do? I could not affront

him. He uttered not a word, to which I could object! » —

« I admit, » replied Willoughby, « that the difficulties were exactly such as you describe! I think therefore, if I may presume to blame him, that my great friend's visit was injudicious. I am not certain, Lady Arabella, that even so humble a person as I am, may not do you mischief by this interview! » — « Oh, you will not desert me, Sir Ralph! » she cried eagerly: « you have a defence in your open countenance! in the noble manner, in which all the world says, that you have declined the paths of ambition! » Willoughby sighed. « Excellent Princess! » he answered — (« forgive me for this presumptuous expression!) — your goodness thinks too highly of

mankind ! I have indeed most sincerely declined the odious paths of ambition; but there are too many, who will not believe me ! Judging by their own incorrigibly--sophisticated hearts, they cannot suppose it possible that another should be actuated by simple and virtuous inclinations ! They believe that my retreat is only some scheme of disguise; some plan for the purpose of carrying on secret manœuvres. Unfortunately Raleigh's visit to me, as well as to you, will confirm this suspicion. And it is on this account that my fears anticipate some imprudence even from our present conversation. » — « Oh that I had not been born to this provoking and vain station ! » exclaimed Lady Arabella. « Can I not have a kind adviser ? Is there danger in the

most virtuous conversations? Is the very consultation how to avoid offence an offence itself? »

What could Willoughby say? He felt the extreme hardship of her situation; and almost forgot his own in sympathy for hers. But delusion at the present moment would probably be eventual cruelty. It became necessary that she should be fully sensible in how critical and painful a condition she was placed. Raleigh might visit her again: some of Raleigh's most known and active adherents might visit her. He had, for Raleigh's sake, treated the former visit as importing nothing: he did not believe so! — He even doubted, if Raleigh did not suppose that he had succeeded in his object: but from Lady Arabella's con-

versation he now learned, that this penetrating Statesman must have grossly misconstrued any words, which seemed to give any remote or possible assent to any concurrence with him in any public matter whatever!

Of all the painful impressions which disturb the course of content with our existence here, one of the most comfortless is, as I have observed, a loss, or great diminution, of the confidence in the virtue and kindness of our fellow-beings! If we suspect that all is disguise and deceit; that all professions are empty; that each is playing his own separate game; and that there is a heartless disregard to all but selfish gratification, no moment is safe, but that which is employed in the most anxious watchfulness for personal and indivi-

dual interest or defence. Language and sentiments, in themselves the most delightful, become detestable and abhorrent as signs of intended delusion. That, which we have been accustomed to consider as a proof of intellectual preeminence, becomes a proof of stultification: and talents, which are employed in intellectual pursuits abstracted from Self, are only praised, that they may continue to be led astray!

When we see every thing go wrong; when we observe the success of deception and fraud; when we have proof that innocence cannot secure safety; when we examine the characters of those, who have become prosperous in the world; and the mode by which they have become prosperous, we can-

not without great difficulty exclude, or weaken, this comfortless impression.

Lady Arabella deserved to be happy: but all her virtues increased her dangers, and her chances of ill success, and misfortune in the world. It is true, that the road to final happiness may be through the defiles of Misery: but what perils lurk in the way? Who is sure that he will have fortitude, or firmness, to withstand the temptations to wrong created by threats, pain, privation, calumny, persecution? Who is sure that he will be patient under insult; forbearing and cheerful under want; and kind, tender, and forgiving under oppression and ingratitude?

He would have given her with the purest sincerity advice how to conduct herself with the most prudence, if his

ingenuity could have furnished him with the clearest mode: but he was bewildered by the opinions, which were conflicting in his mind. Perhaps, had Lady Arabella been entire mistress of her own actions, he would have seen a simple plan, which, though it could not have secured her inoffensive passage through life, yet would at least have had the satisfaction and glory of unimpeachable rectitude! But she was not the mistress of her own actions. She had not only the judgements and passions of the Shrewburys and Cavendishes to deal with; but she had her own heart to regulate with regard to the approaches of the Seymours. This last alone was likely to form a source of suspicion not to be allayed.

Willoughby was not aware, Lady

Arabella could still less suppose, that another suspicion had already entered the heads of Salisbury and his divan: and that they believed that Willoughby himself was mad enough to aspire to the hand of this Princess. They well knew his retreat; and they were equally acquainted with Raleigh's visit to both. Even the Seymours heard of the place of Willoughby's retirement; and grew jealous. Though desperate in fortune, he was of four-fold older nobility than the Seymours: and in intellect and acquirements still more their superior! —

Salisbury well knew the advantage of all this; though he affected to despise it: and in truth, it must be confessed, that, if Willoughby had been

inclined, a little assiduity and a little management might have enabled him to detach the Lady's inclinations from the present favourite.

Willoughby was more anxious to end the visit for her sake, than for his own. He was too familiar with the present state of Court espionage, not to have a dread of the evils of prolonged interviews of this kind. He rose to take his leave. Lady Arabella gave him her hand; and he kissed it. She dropped a tear, when he quitted her; and intreated him to pay her another visit.

When he reached home, he found on his table a long letter from Raleigh, who had returned to the Court. It gave a full description to him of what was going on; and was written

in the strongest vigour of bursting indignation. All the bitterness of his acute talents was applied to the development of most of the characters now in possession of Power. There was no need to write their names over them: the features were sufficiently prominent to mark them out. But Raleigh added a short allegory; or Fiction, which was so obscure, that Sir Ralph in vain attempted to make out its import. He wrote down in his Common-place book the names and enigmatical words; and put against them guesses of explanation to assist him in decyphering the secret. He would not have taken so much pains, but that he suspected there was some allusion to Lady Arabella; and he felt so interested about her, that he would

have spared no labour, by which he might get at intelligence to guard her against the snares he suspected were preparing for her. He knew too well she was no match for Raleigh in talents, experience, or temper.

A fortnight passed in these anxieties. He mused; and read; and rambled in the fields and woods. Lady Arabella wrote to him, that she had had very angry letters from the Court; and that the Cavendishes, with whom she was living, had altered their whole conduct to her; and had become excessively harsh; and when she complained, hinted that they were acting under orders, which they dared not disobey. She intreated him to come to her; but said, that he must do it secretly.

This necessity of secrecy made him

for her sake, as well as his own, resolve to refrain from the visit. He wrote a very cautious, but gentle and kind answer; in which he intreated her to be patient, reserved, solitary, and as far from the most remote appearance of any concern with public affairs of any kind as he well knew that she was from the reality. It was utterly impossible to write such a letter without inserting some allusions purposely vague. This arose principally from a desire to guard her against Raleigh; whom yet it would have been an indelicacy, and perhaps a breach of friendship, to name.

In a few days from this time a letter was brought him, in the hand of an acquaintance, with whom he had been familiar in Burleigh's office, which filled

him with astonishment and horror. It related that Raleigh, Cobham, Grey of Wilton, etc. and their accomplices, had been committed to the Tower for High Treason. The conjectures regarding the nature of the Plot were endless. One of the reports was, that it concerned to movements made for the purpose of putting Lady Arabella upon the throne.

This was in every respect a shock to Willoughby, to which at first all his fortitude gave way. He saw in it a complication of dangers and evils, which reflection did not diminish!

One of the first suggestions of his heart was to pay a visit to Raleigh in the Tower. But many objections occurred before he could put this into execution. He had several letters from friends, some real, some perhaps

only calling themselves by that sacred name, warning and imploring him to weigh with the utmost prudence every step he took; to suffer no generous ebullition of indignant courage to lead him into useless appearances of any privity with those implicated in the present charges; and to hint that his ruin was meditated, if the slightest opportunity was given.

All this intelligence agreed minutely with his own suspicions. He had already seen the danger, that might hereafter arise from his accidental interviews with Lady Arabella; and from the moment he first encountered Raleigh, when he came to visit him in his retreat, he anticipated gloom and evil from it.

His prudence for once prevailed; and he went not at present to the Tower.

He yielded to Lady Arabella's intreaties ; and paid her one visit. She was in a perfect maze ; she wept incessantly ; and her senses seemed a little flighty. Nothing could be more evident to Willoughby's acute understanding , than that nothing had passed between Raleigh and Her , of the treasonable scheme of which he was accused. But she lamented in bitter words , that with whatever entire freedom from all political intrigue and all desire of public life she acted , her name was always involved in some perilous matter ; that it was bandied about to serve the ambition and plots of others : and that she suffered all the evils of ambitions , without its good ; and all the privations of solitude , without its tranquillity.

What comfort had Willoughby to

give her? He felt too strongly, that these remarks were well founded. No light penetrated his own bosom: it was all unbroken despondence! A State-system had been adopted, which scarcely left the possibility of escape to those, whom the directors of Power were desirous to sacrifice. The horrid thought crossed him, that it was intended to sacrifice the life of Lady Arabella. He guessed not why. If it was the intention to sacrifice Raleigh, he less wondered at it.

“ Your spirit is fled, Sir Ralph Willoughby ” cried Lady Arabella: “ your resources fail, when I had expected to have found a sure anchor in your advice! ” All that Willoughby could answer was: “ Deserve well, Lady Arabella! Keep your conscience; and your

actions clear, as you have hitherto done!
The rest is in the hands of Providence! »

He returned to his solitary cottage. It is perhaps only in the deepest grief that solitude is dangerous. Profound anxiety, and a kind of feverish Despondence, preyed upon his mind. Hitherto all had gone wrong with him through life. He entered into a severe self-examination. He could not charge himself with any great faults; nor with any very obvious errors. He had endeavoured to act uprightly, honourably, and generously. He had always on his conscience, and in his heart, the remembrance of the most perfect and the most comprehensive of all moral duties: the rule of *Doing, as he would be done by*.

His sagacity forced upon him that, of which the conviction sunk his bosom

into the most oppressive melancholy , that the most virtuous part of his conduct had been most in the way of his success in the world. It is to say one thing , when you mean another ; to appear most pleased , when you are most angry : to speak but kindly , when you mean to commit the greatest injury ; to appear to pay deference to the opinions of others , yet secretly to defeat them all you can ; to betray and take advantage of the knowlege you thus derive ; on all occasions to wear a mask ; on no occasion to postpone self-interest to any other object !

These are frightful assertions ; but ; alas , they are frightful truths ! If they seem to impeach the ways of Providence , it must be recollected , that the ways of Providence are mysterious and hidden to Man's finite capacity !

With these convictions hanging with the weight of death upon his energies, he made every effort to summon up his magnanimity. He still persevered in his literary occupations. But his fancy of course took a still more sombre cast. He attempted to raise himself above all sublunary anxieties, and affections. This gave an extraordinary sublimity to some of his Fragments: but it also gave them sometimes a great obscurity. They became too much detached from human interests; and travelled among the clouds with too spiritual and evanescent an ambition.

Cobham wrote him a letter, breaking out into all the wailings of an abject heart; mixed up with passages of cunning and subtlety, which added

to his pain in reading it. Cobham had mistaken his point: it was intended to convince Willoughby of his entire innocence: it had the effect of making him suspect, that there really had been some tampering somewhere.

The young Lord Grey of Wilton also wrote him a letter, which made a very different impression on his feelings. This unfortunate youth recurred to the conversations with him in Whichwood Forest. He lamented that he had not been practically a better convert to Willoughby's opinions: that he had not withdrawn himself from the world; and relied upon the pleasures of nature; and the tranquillity of a private life. His youth; some excellent traits in his character; and the antiquity and lustre of the family

which Lord Grey represented, made Willoughby deeply sympathise with his present ill fortune.

Reflection could, alas, give little satisfaction to him on this painful subject. All was dark and perplexed in his conjectures. He had no doubt that the charges were false in the extent to which public report carried them: but his private suspicions that Raleigh had been carrying on something of which advantage could be taken, were very harassing to him. He was sure that no power, which Salisbury could acquire over him, would be lost; and there was a hollow iniquity in the Times, which rendered all uncertain; and a trust even in innocence but a frail anchor.

The anxious period, that interven-

ed till the Trial of these accused Politicians, preyed upon Willoughby's mind; wore his health; and interrupted all the occupations that could enliven or soothe solitude.

The time of Trial at length came: every cultivated English reader is familiar with that Trial. Raleigh too inconsiderately summoned Willoughby as a witness, to prove certain *alibis*. In his eagerness for self-liberation, he pressed certain questions, which appeared to Willoughby entirely superfluous; while they seemed to raise an inference that he was in the confidence of the other to an extent that was utterly untrue.

Willoughby caught the eye of Salisbury; and saw how deeply this struck him. Salisbury now seemed

inclined to press hard questions upon Willoughby: Raleigh fired: he saw the imprudence he had committed; and endeavoured to redeem it by another yet more inconsiderate. He seemed to be leading to an examination of the history of Willoughby's life, by way of proving that he had been of an opposite Faction; and therefore that if he had had any treasonable schemes in agitation, Willoughby could never have been chosen as his confidante! He alluded to Essex: he put a question, that seemed to touch on the circumstances of his death! Salisbury turned so pale, and trembled so, that his emotion was visible to many spectators.

When Willoughby's examination ceased, there was a buzz through the

Court. The audience were inclined to receive him with a shout of applause, if they had dared. A murmur ran through the Court: « what a gallant spirit! what a noble form! what talents and expression! how considerate! how firm, and undaunted! how worthy of his friend Raleigh's best genius! but how much gentler, and kinder, and mellow, in his looks and his thoughts! »

The murmur passed the walls of the Court. As he came into the open air, the crowd shouted: « Long live Willoughby! long live the generous Willoughby! » —

Alas, these applauses cheered not Willoughby's heart! they sunk upon it, as the prelude of death! He knew how much they would prejudice him

in the minds not merely of the Judicial Tribunal, but of those, who held the helm of State! Salisbury, he was sure, had now at least, if not before, become his irreconcilable foe! It was obvious that not only this Minister, but all his colleagues present, were convinced that he was a full accomplice in all Raleigh's schemes, whatever they were.

At length the Trial closed. Raleigh, and his companions, were found guilty. Who has not heard, what was the impression, which this trial made on the public opinion? « Raleigh » it is said by historians, « went into Court the most hated man in England! He came out of it the most applauded and glorious! — His mighty spirit; his powerful talents; his self-possession;

the constant ingenuity and readiness of his answers; contrasted with the unjust and brutal mode, in which the prosecutors and the Court conducted themselves, all contributed to produce this effect!

Willoughby returned to his cottage, to meditate on what had passed. — What was meditation on this subject but madness? We may flatter ourselves, as we will: but the incumbency of immediate danger sheds a bitter into the cup even of the most innocent and exquisite enjoyments! When the breath of Heaven blew upon him in all its freshness; when the Sun smiled; and the flowers emitted their fragrance; he said, « how long shall I possess these blessings? Raleigh is debarred of them: Cobham, and young Grey are

debarred of them! I have not been of their factions: but, alas, innocence will not protect me! » —

When he resorted to those creations, in which a sublime and pathetic fancy finds vent for its aërial travels, the sting of earthly injustice; the recollection of the merciless fang of corrupt power, came across him; broke the spell of enchantment; and placed prisons and scaffolds in its room!

He visited Raleigh in the Tower. He found him calm; occupied with mighty plans of study; and more illustrious in his misfortunes than in his prosperity! Perhaps the fault of Raleigh's mind was excess of daring ambition. The pressure of disappointment, the cloud of sorrow, corrected its too ardent blaze! Willoughby felt

his soul comforted and elated by this sight.

A great Man struggling with the storms of Fate is a sublime spectacle! He said to himself: « then our spirit, the best part of our being, is not at the mercy of Man's injustice, or cruelty! These dreary apartments: these scowling guards; the waving sword; and the suspended axe, cannot weaken the elasticity of an heroic and cultivated mind! To me imprisonment has appeared among the most frightful of human evils.— To be shut from the participation of those elements, which give a spring to our corporeal life! Hideous abuse of Man's power, to inflict this punishment for slight offences! But how much more horrible still, that it should often depend on mere accusation, supported

only by the oath of a perjured individual, prompted by fraud and a desire of avaricious extortion! — Raleigh smiles at these chains! glorious proof of the power of genius: of the omnipotence of grand and aspiring intellect! Hitherto his mighty faculties have been darkened to my contemplation by many allays! He now shines in the brightness of the mellowest splendor! His heroic actions illustrate his vast knowledge: his vast knowledge dignifies and emblasons his heroic actions! I had begun to despair. — Man's material part is at the mercy of wickedness and despotism! I look at Raleigh; and see that Mind can yet be triumphant! » —

When Willoughby came back to his solitude, he endeavoured to take

advantage of these impressions; and to reconcile himself to whatever course Fate might have in store for him, when he received intimation from two or three quarters, that Evidence was collecting against him in the secret bureau of the State-Office; and urging him to fly the Country, while yet it was in his power.

Conscious of innocence, though fully aware that innocence was but a feeble protection, he heard this advice with disdain. He said, «I scorn to obtain my safety at the expence of affording the world seeming proofs of my guilt, when I am innocent! I have never harboured a thought of Treason! I have never entered into a single cabal! I have rejected and abhorred intrigue, much as I have seen of it!

If Raleigh has dabbled in any political schemes, which are open to the punishment of the State, he knew me too well to make me privy to them ! But Salisbury suspects that I have betrayed him to Raleigh. I have been put in very trying situations ; but never yet under any provocation did I betray any one ! » —

The warnings were too true. In a few days Willoughby was carried a prisoner to the Tower. All his papers were seized at the same time ; and carried to the Secretary of State's office ! He was kept in close confinement ; and allowed no intercourse with Raleigh ; or any other involved in political accusations.

The charges against him were partly the same as those for which Raleigh, and others, had been tried ; and partly

special. The latter were for secret and individual tamperings with Lady Arabella; for Foreign correspondence in aid of his schemes, re-opening the factious connection for which his father and grandfather had been exiled and attainted; for pretending some of the rights of Royal Blood by his descent from the *Delapoles*; and in this vein of mad ambition, even aspiring to Lady Arabella's hand! —

Some of these charges were so vague, and the whole so multiplied, that Willoughby's sagacity instantly saw, that all the advantage which the subtlety of lawyers, and the ingenuity of political malice, could suggest, was intended to be taken of every possible circumstance, that could be twisted into a meaning, that would seem to

establish his guilt ! 'The conduct of Sir Edward Coke on Raleigh's Trial assured him that nothing which ferocious and coarse language and the inexhaustible subtlety of a head overflowing with pedantic and technical acuteness could do, would be omitted !

When copies of the indictments, (for there was more than one), were brought to him, none but a Professional head could follow their intricacies. And it so happened, that he could ill afford to pay for the best professional advice !

He prepared for his trial as well as he could. He called forth all his faculties; and his glorious fortitude. It seemed as if the prosecutors were unwilling to incur delay. A discontent was fast spreading over the nation; an opi-

nion was every day gaining ground, that Willoughby was to be sacrificed to Salisbury's fears of his disclosure of State-secrets relative to the part taken by this crooked Minister in Essex's condemnation and death; and Willoughby's name, which had been hitherto little known, was becoming an object of popular idolatry.

The Trial lasted a long October day from an early hour of the morning. The Court was so crowded by every person of any rank, who had activity or interest to procure a seat, that such an assemblage had scarcely ever been before witnessed. The eyes of all were on the prisoner. He was dressed in a black velvet suit and cloak, with a large ruff, all resembling the Spanish costume, which formed the picturesque

fashion of the day! He was tall, and made with extraordinary symmetry! His large dark eyes, always thoughtful, now deeply melancholy, were lighted by the indignant fire of injured innocence. The bloom of youth had been effaced by misfortune; its gracefulness remained!

The Trial had not proceeded far, when the production of Willoughby's MSS. papers discovered, on what the great reliance of a conviction was placed. The Fragments of his Epic poem; his characters of Cotemporaries; Raleigh's letters to him; and his attempted scheme to unravel the enigmatical part of Raleigh's principal letter, were all brought forward. Witnesses of every interview with Lady Arabella deposed to what they heard; and what they pretended to have heard. Her de-

ference to him ; the civil things she said to him ; the advice she asked of him ; were all related with many interpolations, and perversions .

That, which came on Willoughby with the most surprize was a letter purporting to be from an Emissary at a Foreign Court, addressed to him, and intercepted by the vigilance of Government! — When it was read in open Court, Willoughby could not doubt that it was a fabrication . He neither knew a person, who could have written such a letter ; nor one of the dark circumstances to which the writer seemed to allude, as familiar to him whom he addressed ! But these were things, which could not in their nature admit of negative proof !

There was something like a groan

through the audience, when this letter was produced and read. The Court, which had at one time felt uneasy and depressed under the apparent symptoms of disdain, and disgust, which broke forth from the assembly, recovered their courage; and grew again haughty, and full of insults and menaces.

Some of the auditors were staggered; others suspected the dreadful deception: all saw the danger! Willoughby stood undaunted; but pale. He could not conceal from himself the perils, to which this ineffable act of wickedness, meditated at his life, exposed him!

The Sun went down; yet the prosecutors had not closed their case. The Trial was adjourned to another day. It was well for the audience, whose fee-

lings had been kept on the rack, till they were exhausted!

The Crown Lawyers exerted themselves with extraordinary ability and labour to establish a case of very flagrant guilt. All the prejudices that they could conjure up, they pressed forward with unsparing malignity. They entered into all the details of the disaffections and treasons of the Willoughby family. The all-dread workings of the poison of the *Delapole* blood were not forgotten. Sir Ralph was described to be a young man whose desperate fortunes combined with his unbounded ambition to make him dare the most rash adventures, and whose self-opinion and arrogance induced him to lead even the most able and experienced. They asserted that

Raleigh did nothing without him; and that his recommendation of youth and a good person prompted Raleigh to avail himself gladly of the influence he was likely to obtain over Lady Arabella, to bend her to the treasonable designs in which she was to be made the unthinking instrument of their elevation!

Willoughby's interviews with Lady Arabella, which could not be denied; and the enigmas of Raleigh's letter to him, combined to give unfavourable inuendos to some of the bitter opinions in his sketches for the History of his Own Time; and to many of the allegories and several of the supposed allusions of his fragments for the Epic Poem of *Altheadora*, which supported some of the charges by something like a plausibility of Evidence! These wor-

ked up a disposition to give credit to the intercepted letter: and then the proofs seemed complete!

Willoughby's Counsel rebutted all the circumstantial part of this Evidence as they could! It unfortunately happened, that he fell into the hands of men, who were rather mere drudging lawyers, than men of genius and literature! They had little personal knowledge of him; his native character; or habits. Probably, they could not have comprehended them, if they had!

The Counsel for the Crown replied with bitterness; and they had all the advantage over those of the Prisoner in point of ability.

When Sir Ralph was called on to speak for himself, he addressed the Court with an heroic dignity; and in

a strain of the most exalted eloquence. He passed over all the technical subtleties, (an omission which made a chain of the most irrefragible arguments go for nothing in the minds of the lawyers); and appealed to the unsophisticated understandings of his audience; to the sympathy of noble bosoms; to those feelings, which the bad consider as delusions, but which, when genuine, never yet misled the judgment.

His melancholy, his despondence, his indifference to life, gave him augmented force of talent. The Court sometimes rung with the deep and mellow tones of his voice; and every heart, that had sensibility, burst into agonies of tears at the frequent intermixture of pathetic appeals, into which, as if

against his will, he fell, in tones so overwhelmingly guileless; so utterly beyond the suspicion of affectation, that two or three of the simplest words, two or three slight accents, pierced like lightning through the whole audience.

He explained the import of many of his MSS. He declared them to be materials for his Epic poem; and with an indignant force of explanation he gave an account of those, which were intended to form part of his Contemporary History. He admitted that in first sketches intended for private examination he might now and then have used colours, which on more sober thought required softening. He said that truth was his first object. *If* History was not truth, was it not worse

than idleness? " It is the pen of the Historian, that often, though not often enough, holds a terror over inebriated Power! " said he. " My pen may be suppressed; " he went on: " its traces, I know, are already doomed to destruction; and the hand, that has guided it, is destined to be stopped from a continuation of its memorials by a cruel and undeserved death! It will not avail! The day will arrive, when the truth shall be told; even though it be at the distance of two hundred years! Some tender Spirit at length shall catch my flame! My mantle shall descend upon him! He shall tell, what I am not permitted to tell, when the mouth that stops me shall for ages have mouldered into the dust whence it sprung; and shall be only remembered in the

colours which Truth shall have decreed to belong to it! ” — The Audience trembled for him. He perceived, that his indignation was carrying him beyond the bounds of prudence!

He had a difficult part to manage in the relation of the nature and degree of his intimacy with Raleigh. He was too generous to attempt his defence, even when the truth justified him, at Raleigh's cost. He knew not how to deal with the letter of Raleigh, because there really was a mystery in it, though *he* was not privy to the secret.

He now and then electrified Salisbury by generous appeals to him, which made him doubt his own deeply-rooted suspicions. But darkness, fear, and cruelty, soon resumed their ascendancy over Salisbury's heart.

At the close of this eloquent and magnanimous Defence, there was not a disinterested auditor, that doubted Willoughby's innocence! The Court was appalled; and a dreadful silence of many minutes ensued! —

The Chief Justice then began to sum up. He was embarrassed at the commencement by Willoughby's dignified and overpowering eloquence. He knew that he had an audience strongly prejudiced against him to contend with. The jargon of pedantic law and forced constructions with which he mixed up his summary of facts, was not merely dull and repulsive, but disgusting. He then launched out into an invective against what he called the abuse of abilities; against those, who instead of taking the patient course of labour to

elevate themselves, chose to attempt to gratify their ambitious desires, without paying the price for this gratification! who embraced a course of adventure and political intrigue, that they might *leap* into power! who addressed the imagination, and the passions, when they ought to appeal to reason! and who supposed that a few splendid sentences of school-boy flourish would overcome proof; and make black appear white!

When he had said these things, he congratulated himself, as if he had pronounced oracular wisdom; and was surprized to find that his supposed acuteness and solid sagacity had made no impression on the Audience; and that their impatience and disgust were nearly breaking into outward and loud

disapprobation!

When he came to his conclusion, he charged the Jury almost with threats, telling them that in his opinion the facts charged had been clearly proved; and if proved, that it was his duty as a Judge to tell them, that not a scintilla of doubt could be entertained, that they amounted to the crime of Treason. He conjured them not to be led away by their feelings into false mercy to a young man, because he could make a plausible speech! That they owed mercy to those, whose lives and properties were endangered by conduct so wicked and ruinous as that of Willoughby and his accomplices! That if they believed him to have talents, the severity of justice was on that very account the more demanded from

them; That if they were affected by his oratory, it only made him an instrument of evil the more necessary to be got rid of!

At length the Verdict of the Jury was pronounced. They brought in the Prisoner, GUILTY. The Audience heard this Verdict, with mute astonishment, or rather with a groan!

Willoughby stood firm. His countenance was pale; but dignified.

When asked, if he had any thing to say, before sentence was pronounced, he bowed. The Audience listened with breathless suspense. A word quivered on his lips. His deep and mellow voice then rose awefully on the Court.

" I submit with patience! All that

speech can do, is useless. If language could prove innocence, I venture to assert that I have already proved it. But my lot is cast! I can no longer contend with the power of Man in its wantonness! I leave the Court; and the Jury to their own consciences! The day may come, when they may wish themselves as self-satisfied in that respect as I am! My Lords, in the midst of troubles and temptations I have led a life of entire political purity! — The great and prosperous Minister, whom I see yonder, and who once honoured me by the name of Friend, knows it; or ought to know it! If his heart does not tell him so, here, prisoner as I am, found guilty of a Capital Crime by a Verdict which History will record with astonishment, I venture to tell

him firmly, that I pity that heart! —
It is done! I am prepared for my fate!
I know, there is no mercy in the breast
of Man! ” —

He stood upright ; and firm as a rock
in the midst of the bellowing storm !
The Audience burst into convulsions
of tears. A stern observer perceived that
Willoughby was nearly overcome by
this mark of sympathy. He noticed the
agitations of his countenance.

The usual sentence of High Treason
was now pronounced ; too painful to
be here repeated.

Sir Ralph was then conveyed back
to the Tower, to feed upon his own

dreadful reflections! — It was time to eradicate from his heart all earthly ties!

It is only when we are about to lose a blessing, that we begin to know its value. But was existence a blessing to Willoughby? To him it was surely almost all hopeless suffering. Yet it was not all suffering; even to him!

The hues of bliss more brightly glow,
Chastised by sabler tints of woe " *

What ineffable happiness had been pressed into a few of his happier moments of life! How more than doubled was the enjoyment of those moments of high intellect, and unmingled

* *Gray*.

innocence and virtue ; which had no after-regrets ; of which the retrospect was as exquisite as the instant of their presence !

But the day approached , when a violent and unmerited death was to close this magnificent scene of things to a Being , who so exalted it by his abode upon it !

How can I write in adequate language the train of exalted sentiments and reflections , which passed in the mind of this most enlightened and sublime young Man , at this crisis of unexampled injustice and cruelty !

I am come to the close of my volume : and it has fallen upon me at a period , when my health and spirits are in a state of great depression ; and when my time is not at my command.

I have beguiled some of the sufferings during the three months' confinement of a painful malady by these memorials. I go to see "the Eternal City;" the mighty relics of "the fallen Metropolis of the World!" *

Spirit of Him, whom I have thus undertaken, at the distance of more than two Centuries, to consecrate to posterity, forgive me, that I thus desert thee in the agonies of Death; that I attend thee not to the scaffold; and

* " *Above Baccano the postillions stopped; and pointing to a pinnacle, that appeared between two hills, exclaimed "Roma!" That pinnacle was the cross of St. Peter! The "ETERNAL CITY rose before us!"*

that I shrink from the description of thy last heroic moments, more glorious than all the rest of thy glorious life!

Let the reader supply my deficiency! If he surveys thy splendid character with half the admiration with which I contemplate it; and pities thy fate with only a part of my sympathy, he will satisfy thy manes!

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